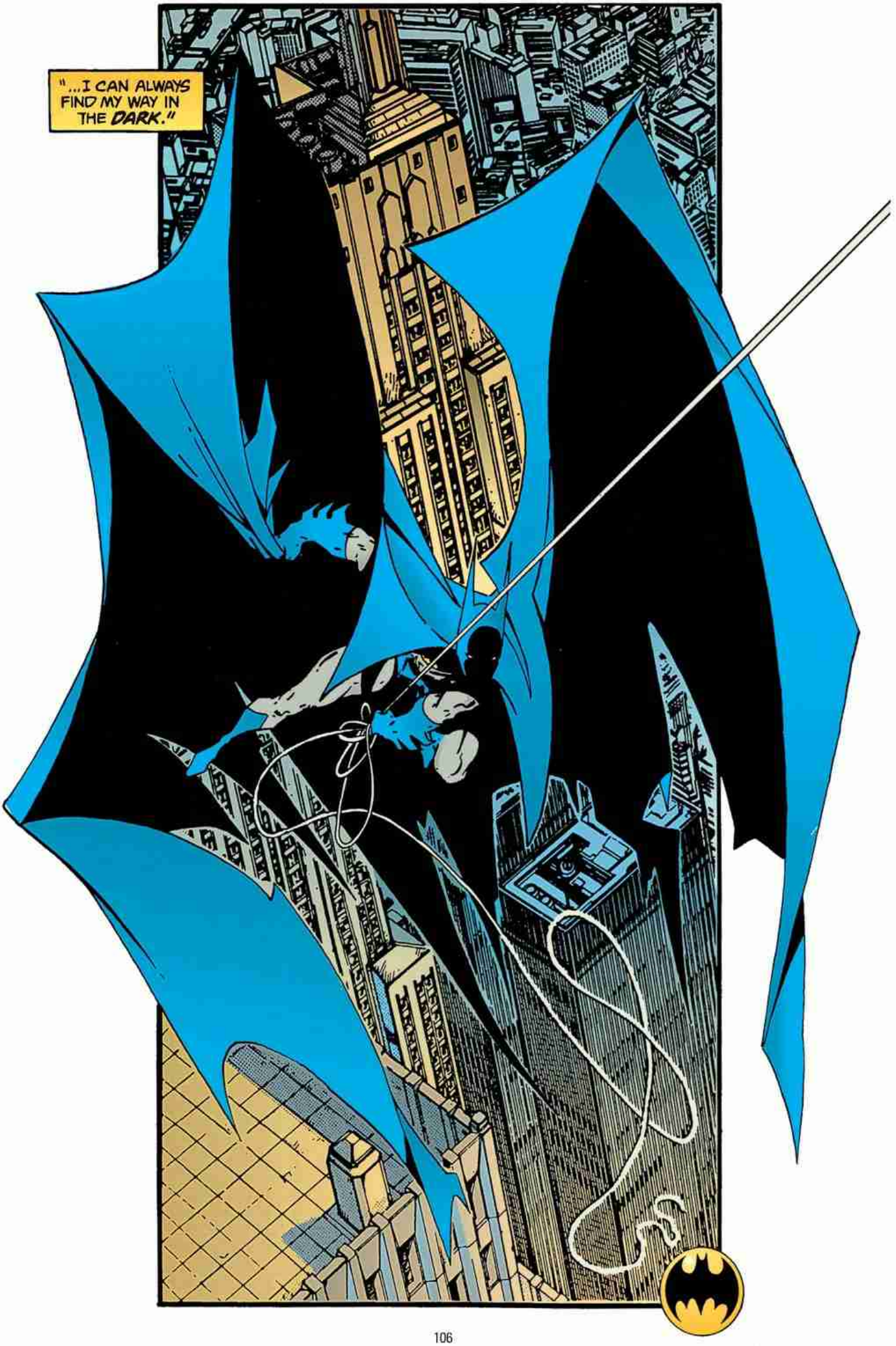
"...I CAN ALWAYS FIND MY WAY IN THE DARK."

# FULL CIRCLE

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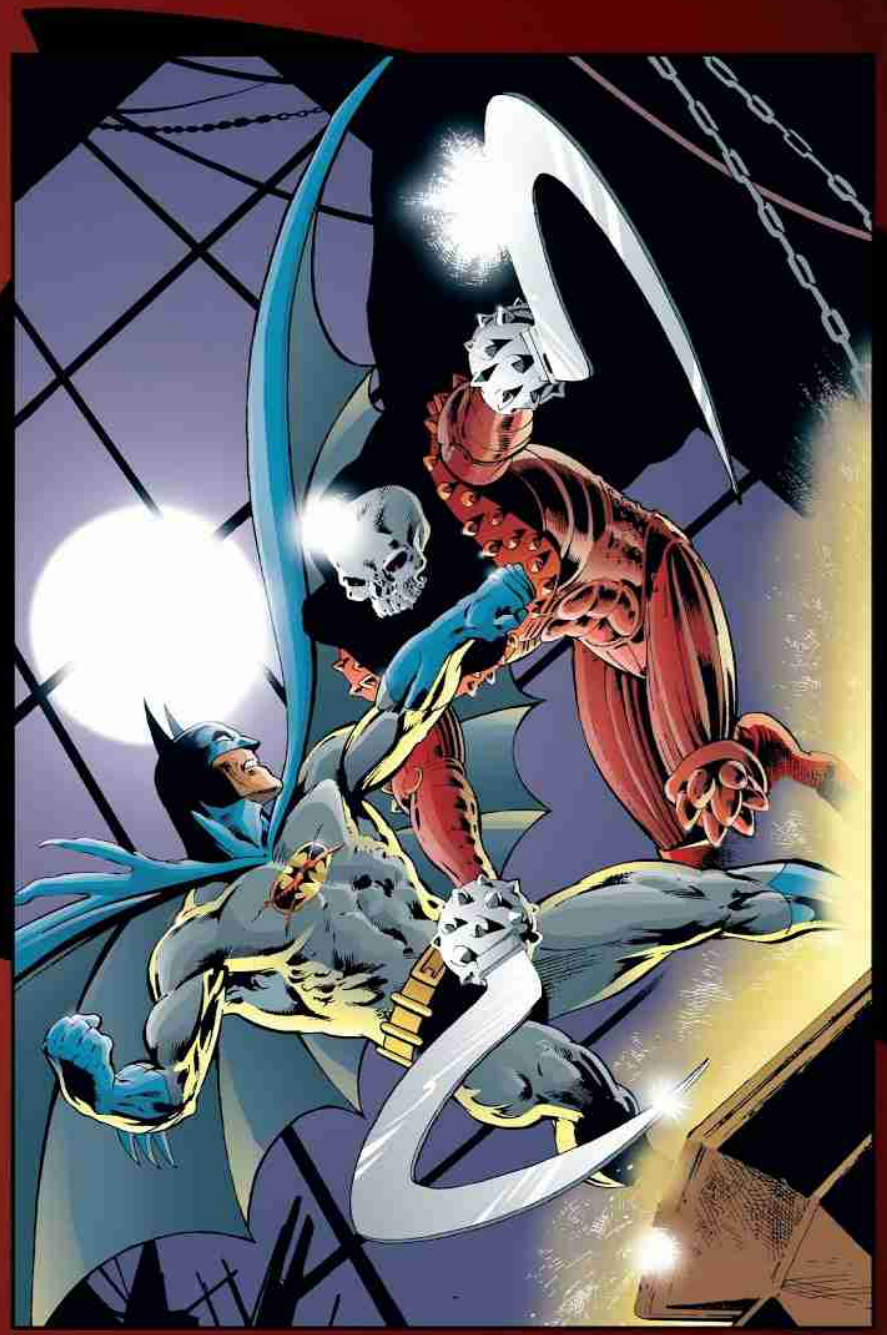

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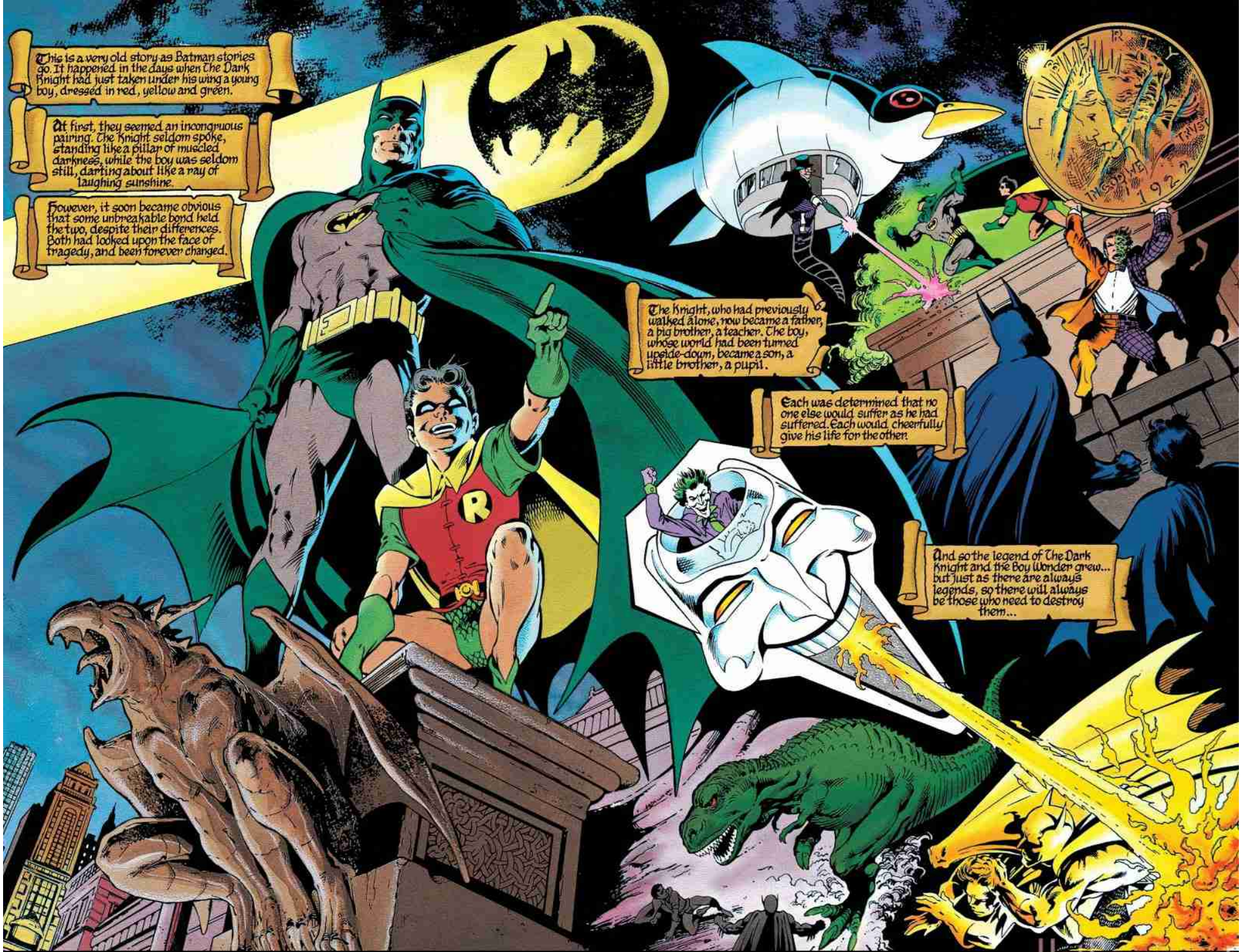
This is a very old story as Batman stories go. It happened in the days when the Dark Knight had just taken under his wing a young boy, dressed in red, yellow and green.
At first, they seemed an incongruous pairing. The Knight seldom spoke, standing like a pillar of muscled darkness, while the boy was seldom still, darting about like a ray of laughing sunshine.
However, it soon became obvious that some unbreakable bond held the two, despite their differences. Both had looked upon the face of tragedy, and been forever changed.
The Knight, who had previously walked alone, now became a father, a big brother, a teacher. The boy, whose world had been turned upside-down, became a son, a little brother, a pupil.
Each was determined that no one else would suffer as he had suffered. Each would cheerfully give his life for the other.
And so the legend of The Dark Knight and the Boy Wonder grew... but just as there are always legends, so there will always be those who need to destroy them...

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5
6
GOTHAM
HEY, YOU--!
DAMN STOWAWAYS! GOD KNOWS WHAT HE TOOK...!
HE DIDN'T TAKE ANYTHING, SAM...
"...GUESS ALL HE WANTED WAS A RIDE."
HOT
BANK ST
HI THERE, HANDSOME...

...MY NAME'S MIRANDA, WANT ME TO READ YOU YOUR RIGHTS?
UH, NO THANK YOU, MA'AM...
I THINK YOU'D BETTER THROW THIS ONE BACK, 'RANDA. WHAT DO YOU WANT, KID?
I GUESS I'M KINDA LOST-- D'YOU KNOW WHERE THIS PLACE IS, LADY?
MASON PLACE? THIS IS ALL THE WAY UPTOWN, ON THE EAST SIDE, KID--REAL YUPPIEVILLE.
TAKE THIS, KID. I KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE IN A NEW TOWN.
THANKS, MA'AM.
PROFILE ISN'T GONNA LIKE YOU GIVIN' HIS MONEY AWAY, 'RANDA!
WHO'S GONNA TELL HIM, RHONDA? BESIDES, WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME ANY-ONE CALLED YOU "MA'AM"?
YOU THERE--
COFFEE
THE NAME'S MIRANDA -- "RANDY" MIRANDA, THEY CALL ME. WHAT'S YOUR PLEASURE, MISTER?
I KNOW NO PLEASURE IN THIS LIFE...



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...MY ONLY SATISFACTION LIES IN PURGING THE STREETS OF SUCH AS YOU...
...IN MAKING YOU FEAR-- THE REAPER!
HUH--?
MIRANDA, GET AWAY! HE'S SOME KINDA SICKO...
SOMEBODY IN GOTH ❤ ME
THE FOOL SEES WISDOM AND KNOWS IT NOT...
KaKLiKT
...AND SO KNOWS ONLY DEATH.
MIRANDA!
SISSSH

JOIN HER IN DEATH--AS YOU DID IN LIFE.
AGGGGH--!
SLSSSH
EEEEEEEEK
WHAT'S THAT?
SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING'S SPOOKING THE GIRLS! BETTER SEE!
PUT IT DOWN, PAL--SLOWLY!
I WILL DO AS YOU WISH, OFFICER...
...TO SHOW YOU THAT HE WHO ALLIES HIMSELF WITH CORRUPTION WILL SURELY DIE WITH IT!
BANG!
BACK AWAY--!
BAM BAM BAM
YOU HOLD NO JURISDICTION OVER ME, OFFICER...
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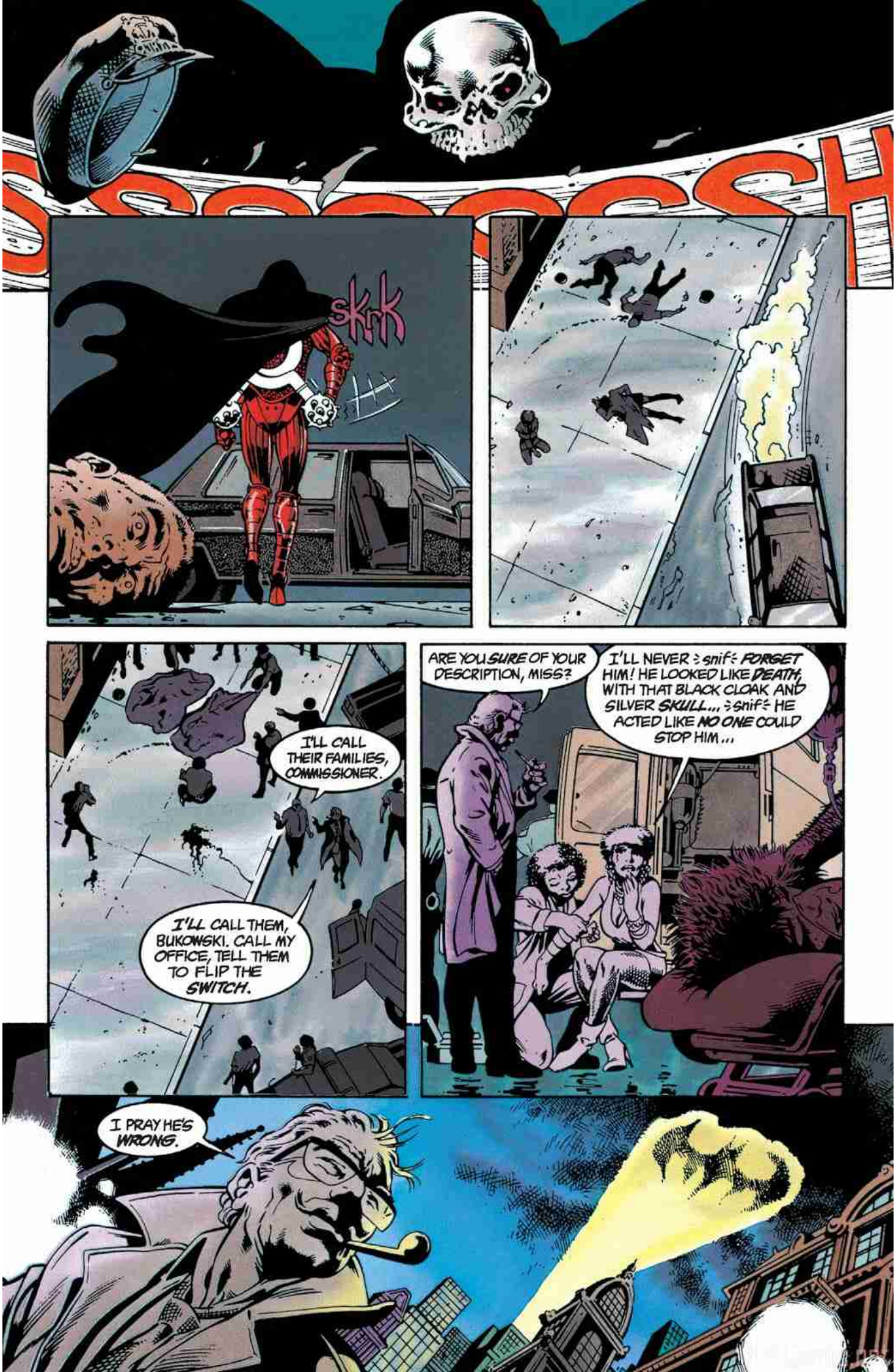
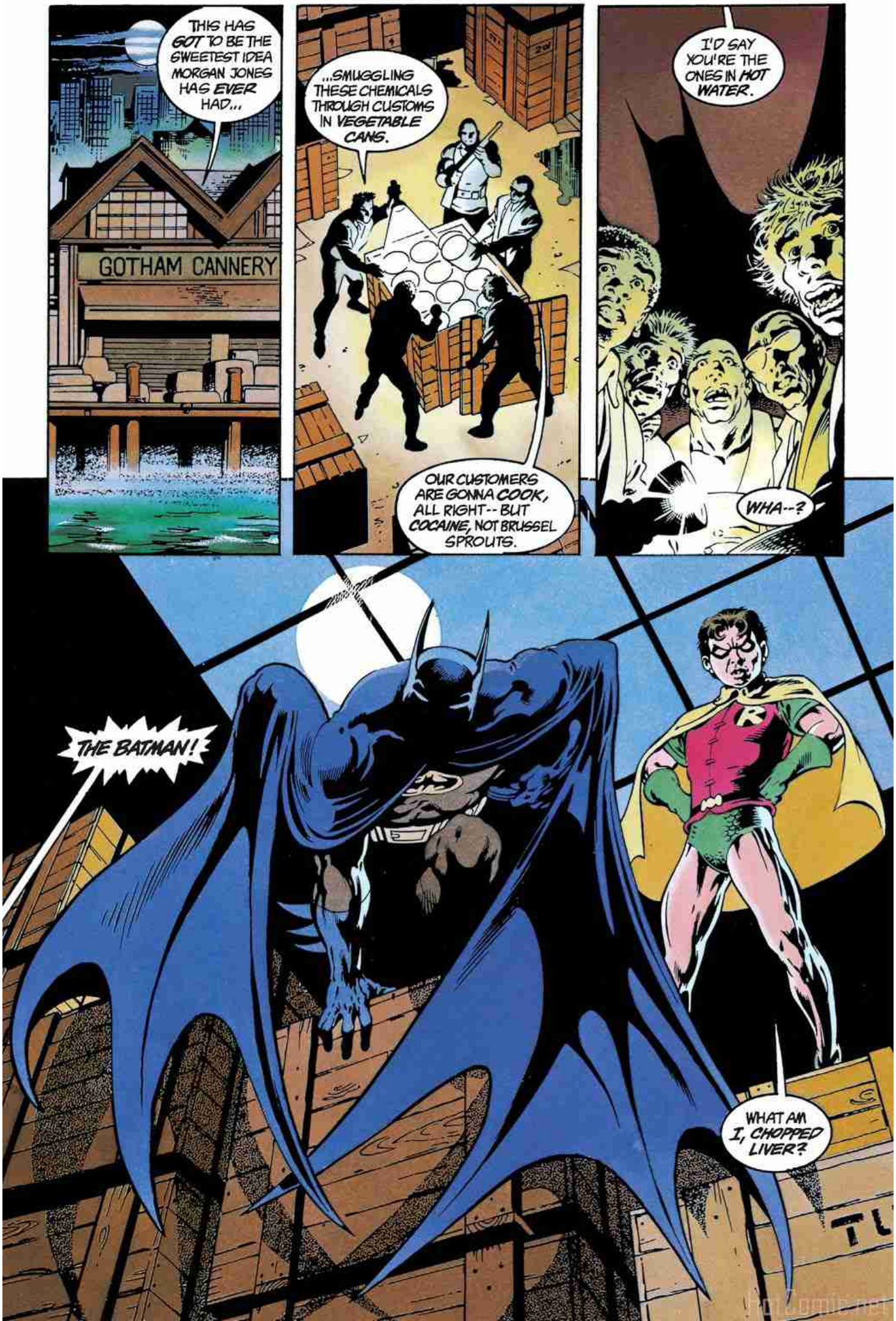
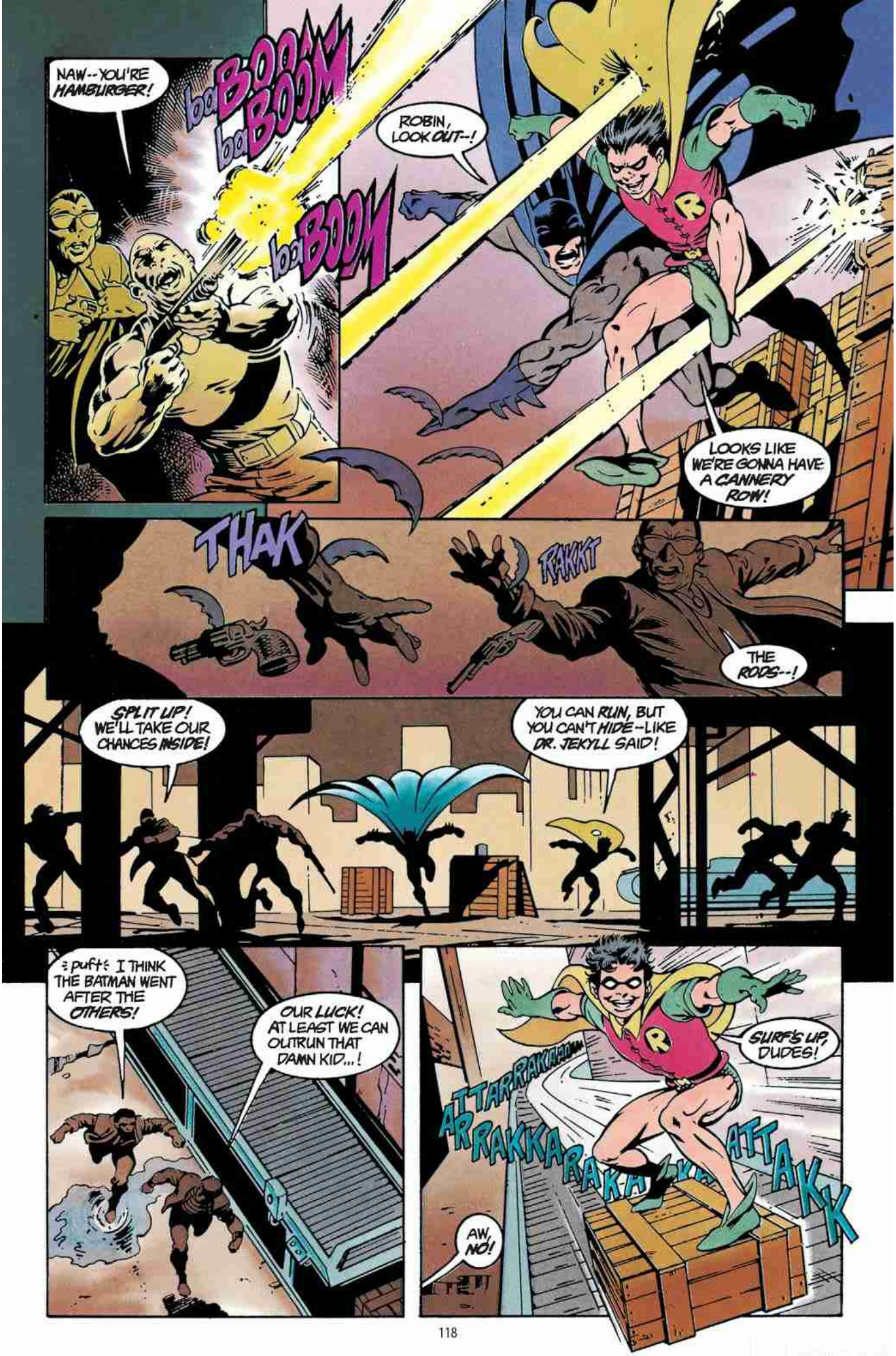

SSSSSSH
skrk
I'LL CALL THEIR FAMILIES, COMMISSIONER.
I'LL CALL THEM, BUKOWSKI. CALL MY OFFICE, TELL THEM TO FLIP THE SWITCH.
ARE YOU SURE OF YOUR DESCRIPTION, MISS?
I'LL NEVER :snif: FORGET HIM! HE LOOKED LIKE DEATH, WITH THAT BLACK CLOAK AND SILVER SKULL... :snif: HE ACTED LIKE NO ONE COULD STOP HIM...
I PRAY HE'S WRONG.


THIS HAS GOT TO BE THE SWEETEST IDEA MORGAN JONES HAS EVER HAD...
GOTHAM CANNERY
...SMUGGLING THESE CHEMICALS THROUGH CUSTOMS IN VEGETABLE CANS.
OUR CUSTOMERS ARE GONNA COOK, ALL RIGHT-- BUT COCAINE, NOT BRUSSEL SPROUTS.
I'D SAY YOU'RE THE ONES IN HOT WATER.
WHA--?
THE BATMAN!
WHAT AM I, CHOPPED LIVER?


NAW--YOU'RE HAMBURGER!
baBOOM baBOOM
baBOOM
ROBIN, LOOK OUT--!
LOOKS LIKE WE'RE GONNA HAVE A CANNERY ROW!
THAK
RAKKT
THE RODS--!
SPLIT UP! WE'LL TAKE OUR CHANCES INSIDE!
YOU CAN RUN, BUT YOU CAN'T HIDE--LIKE DR. JEKYLL SAID!
=puff= I THINK THE BATMAN WENT AFTER THE OTHERS!
OUR LUCK! AT LEAST WE CAN OUTRUN THAT DAMN KID...!
SURF'S UP, DUDES!
ATTARRAKKA
RAKKA
ATTAKK
AW, NO!

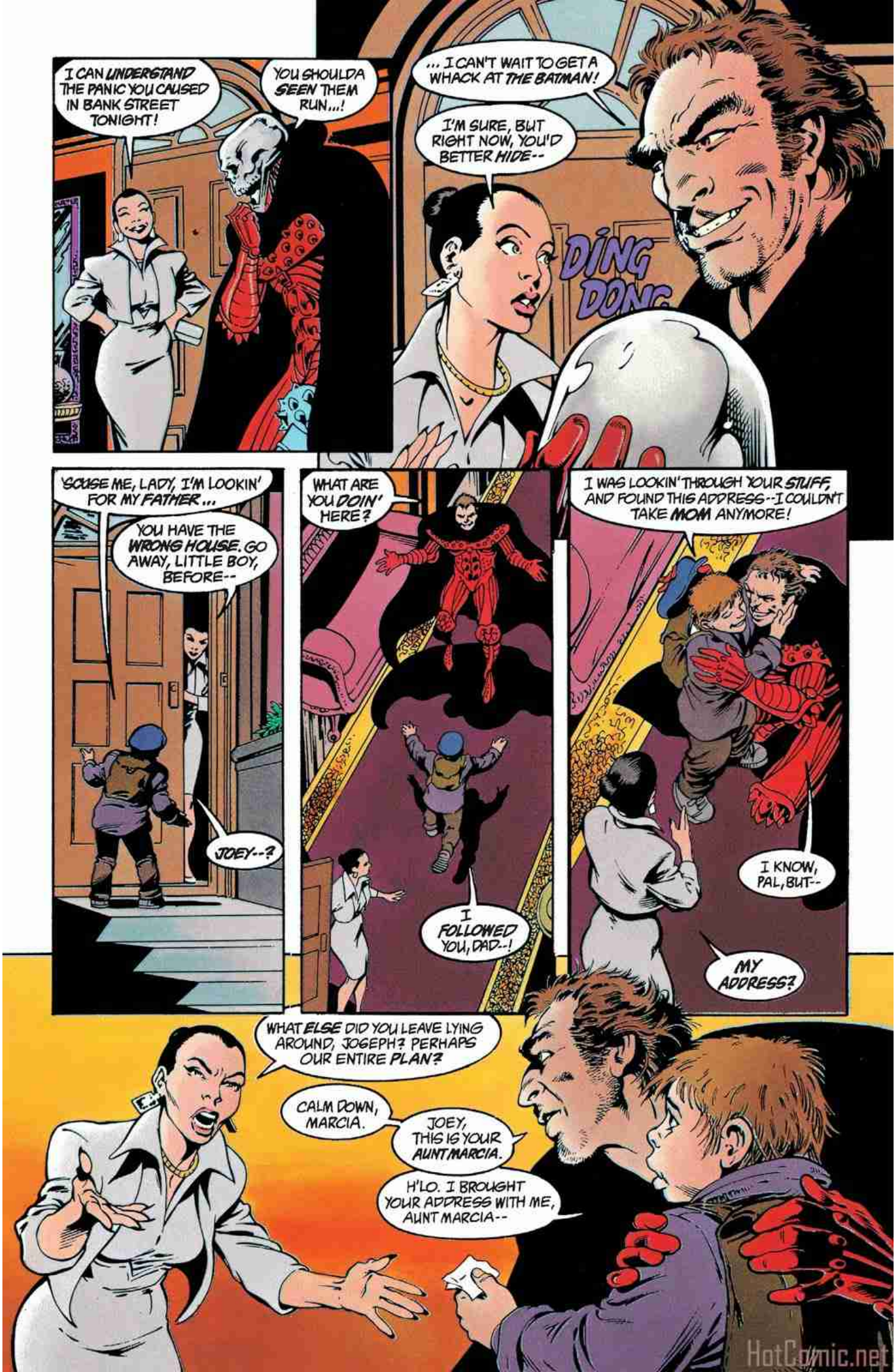
WHOA! WIPEOUT!
TK-WUP
ANY LANDING YOU CAN WALK AWAY FROM...!
THUNK!
NO SENSE RUNNIN'... IF WE CAN JUST FIND OUR RODS...
IT'S A LITTLE LATE FOR THAT.
HERE! HE'S OVER HERE!
BOOM
WHOOM!
DON'T SHOOT, YOU'LL HIT--

PUT ME OUT! PUT ME OUT!
KRAK!
:KAFF: HELP..
HEY, WHO BROUGHT MRS. O'LEARY'S COW?
THEY FORGOT THE CHEMICALS USED TO PROCESS COCAINE ARE HIGHLY FLAMMABLE.
SSSSSSSSSST
BUT YOU DIDN'T. KIND OF IRONIC, ISN'T IT?
I SUPPOSE.

HEY, THE BAT-SIGNAL! LOOKS LIKE WE'LL BE PULLING OVERTIME TONIGHT!
WHATEVER COMMISSIONER GORDON WANTS CAN WAIT, ROBIN!
YOU BEHAVED LIKE THE RANKEST AMATEUR IN THERE! YOU LEFT YOURSELF OPEN TO HOSTILE FIRE AND CHARGED INTO COMBAT WITHOUT A PLAN!
I...I DIDN'T THINK I--
EXACTLY. YOU'RE NOT GOING OUT ON ANOTHER MISSION UNTIL YOU'VE PROVED TO ME YOU'RE FIT.
YESSIR.
IT'S BAD NEWS, BATMAN-- THE REAPER!
IMPOSSIBLE, COMMISSIONER. HE'S DEAD. IT MUST BE SOME IMPERSONATOR, TAKING A SHORT CUT TO A REPUTATION.
THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT, TOO, UNTIL I RAN SOME OF HIS BULLETS THROUGH BALLISTICS...
...THEY MATCH. AND REMEMBER, HIS BODY WAS STOLEN BEFORE THE CORONER COULD PRONOUNCE HIM DEAD.
I REMEMBER, COMMISSIONER. I ALSO REMEMBER WATCHING HIM FALL FORTY STORIES.

A LOT OF YOUR ENEMIES HAVE SURVIVED WORSE THAN THAT. WE'VE GOT TO TAKE HIM DOWN QUICKLY. THE MEDIA ARE HAVING A FIELD DAY.
THE MEDIA ARE THE LEAST OF MY CONCERNS, COMMISSIONER.
SISTERS OF MERCY CONVENT
THIS IS JOAN LINCOLN, REPORTING LIVE FROM THE SISTERS OF MERCY CONVENT OUTSIDE GOTHAM. WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO SECURE AN INTERVIEW WITH RACHEL CASPIAN--
--THE DAUGHTER OF JUDSON CASPIAN, THE REAPER, WHO SEEMS TO HAVE RETURNED TO STALK GOTHAM'S STREETS.
HELLO, IT'S RACHEL. YOU'VE HEARD? YES... MAY I -- I CAN? THANK YOU, I'LL BE OVER SOON.
EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS, MISS CASPIAN.
... FROM DONAHUE, MISS CASPIAN...
...FROM GERALDO, SISTER RACHEL...
LEAVE HER ALONE! HAVE YOU NO RESPECT FOR THIS HOUSE OF GOD?
WHERE TO, LADY?
GOTHAM CITY, PLEASE. WE MAY BE FOLLOWED.
NOT FOR LONG.
GOTHAM'S A BIG PLACE, LADY.
PARK ROW, PLEASE.
JEEZ, YOU ARE SLUMMIN'!

THEN SELL THE NORTHPOINT MALL STOCKS SHORT, IF YOU HAVE TO--YES, I KNOW I CAN GET MORE IF WE WAIT...
...BUT I NEED THE MONEY NOW. YES, I'LL BE AT HOME FOR THE REST OF THE NIGHT.
SEVEN O'CLOCK SHARP TOMORROW MORNING. IF YOU'RE LATE ONCE MORE, YOU'RE FIRED.
I WON'T BE, MS. DUNCAN. GOOD NIGHT, MA'AM.
HAVE YOU LEARNED WISDOM, MARCIA DUNCAN...?
...HAVE YOU LEARNED TO FEAR... THE REAPER?


I CAN UNDERSTAND THE PANIC YOU CAUSED IN BANK STREET TONIGHT!
YOU SHOULDA SEEN THEM RUN...!
... I CAN'T WAIT TO GET A WHACK AT THE BATMAN!
I'M SURE, BUT RIGHT NOW, YOU'D BETTER HIDE--
DING DONG
'SCUSE ME, LADY, I'M LOOKIN' FOR MY FATHER...
YOU HAVE THE WRONG HOUSE. GO AWAY, LITTLE BOY, BEFORE--
JOEY--?
WHAT ARE YOU DOIN' HERE?
I FOLLOWED YOU, DAD--!
I WAS LOOKIN' THROUGH YOUR STUFF, AND FOUND THIS ADDRESS--I COULDN'T TAKE MOM ANYMORE!
I KNOW, PAL, BUT--
MY ADDRESS?
WHAT ELSE DID YOU LEAVE LYING AROUND, JOGEPH? PERHAPS OUR ENTIRE PLAN?
CALM DOWN, MARCIA.
JOEY, THIS IS YOUR AUNT MARCIA.
H'LO. I BROUGHT YOUR ADDRESS WITH ME, AUNT MARCIA--
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--NO ONE ELSE KNOWS.
THIS CHILD HAS MORE BRAING THAN YOU DO, JOSEPH-- NOT THAT THAT'S MUCH OF AN ACHIEVEMENT.
YOU THINK JUST ANYONE COULD PULL THIS OFF? THIS WAS MY PLAN, REMEMBER? I TOOK THE REAPER'S BODY! I KNOW THE EFFECT THIS OUTFIT'LL HAVE ON BATMAN, FIGHTING A GUY HE THINKS IS DEAD!
MAYBE I SHOULD JUST PULL OUT, HUH? THEN YOU'D BE IN IT DEEP, HUH?
I'VE A FEELING MY NEPHEW'S VERY MUCH IN THE DARK, JOSEPH...
...WHY DON'T YOU TELL HIM ABOUT YOUR ...OUR FATHER?
MY GRANDDAD? I NEVER KNEW I HAD ONE!
YOU DON'T, SPORT...
...IN A LOTTA WAYS HE WASN'T MUCH-- KINDA LIKE YOUR OLD MAN. BUT HE WAS MY FATHER, AND THAT HAS TO COUNT FOR SOMETHING.
HIS NAME WAS JOE, TOO...
"...BUT THAT'S ABOUT ALL I REMEMBER ABOUT HIM FROM WHEN I WAS YOUNG.
"THAT AND THE WAY HE SEEMED LIKE A GIANT TO ME. I REMEMBER MORE ABOUT MY MOTHER...
"...SHE RAISED ME AFTER SHE WALKED OUT ON MY OLD MAN, AND TOOK ME WITH HER.
"I DUNNO IF DAD EVER TRIED TO FIND US-- HE SAID HE DID..!"



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"...IF HE HAD, MAYBE WE WOULD'VE STAYED TOGETHER. MOM HAD TO GIVE UP YOUR AUNT MARCIA FOR ADOPTION, WHEN WE WERE PASSING THROUGH GOTHAM.
"SHE SAID THAT WAS BEST. I GUESS I NEVER FORGAVE HER FOR IT...
GOTHA
SOCIA
SERVICE
"...NOT EVEN WHEN SHE WAS DYING. AFTER SHE DIED, I THOUGHT ABOUT TRYING TO FIND DAD...
"...BUT I NEVER DID MUCH ABOUT IT UNTIL AFTER YOU WERE BORN, CHAMP. I DECIDED I WANTED YOU TO KNOW YOUR GRANDFATHER, AND SO DID I.
"...ONCE I FINALLY FOUND HIM, HE WANTED T'KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO HIS DAUGHTER. HE WAS COMING TO GOTHAM ON BUSINESS ANYWAY, AND I WENT WITH HIM.
"HE WAS ALWAYS PRETTY CLOSE-MOUTHED ABOUT HIS BUSINESS. I KNEW IT WAS NOTHING GOOD, BUT I DIDN'T CARE. HE WAS MY FATHER.
"WHILE DAD WAS DOING HIS BUSINESS IN GOTHAM, I FINALLY GOT A SOLID LEAD ON YOUR AUNT MARCIA. I COULDN'T WAIT TO TELL HIM...
"...BUT WHEN I CAUGHT UP TO HIM, HE WAS LEAVING -- WITH THE BATMAN. I DUNNO WHY, BUT I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING. I JUST FOLLOWED THEM...



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"...TO SOME DUMP ACROSS TOWN. THEY TALKED FOR A WHILE. I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT...! BATMAN SAID MY DAD KILLED HIS PARENTS, YEARS BEFORE! I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO...
"...THEN THE BATMAN TOOK OFF HIS MASK! I'D A GIVEN MY SOUL IF ONLY I'D GOTTEN A CLOSER LOOK AT HIS FACE...
"...BECAUSE THEN THEY STARTED FIGHTING! DAD NEVER HAD A CHANCE. BATMAN HIT HIM WHEN HE WASN'T LOOKING...
"...AND THEN HE WAS GOING TO KILL HIM!
"I WAS GOING TO DO SOMETHING --TO THIS DAY, I'M STILL NOT SURE WHAT. BUT I WAS...
HAHAHAHA
"...BUT BEFORE I COULD, I HEARD LAUGHTER...
BANG!
"...THEN I SAW HIM FOR THE FIRST TIME! I'D HEARD OF HIM, AND HOPED HE'D SAVE MY DAD..."



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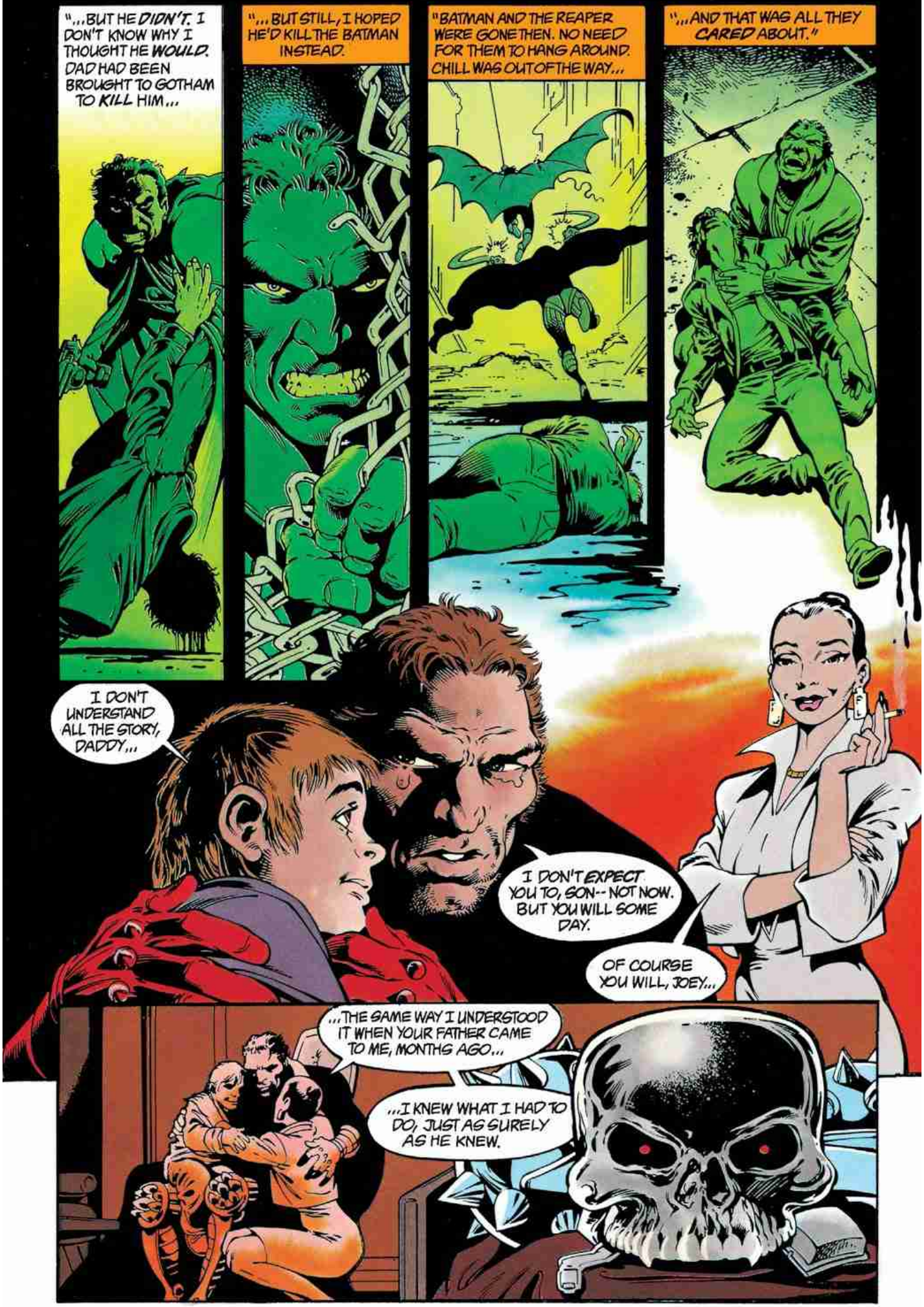
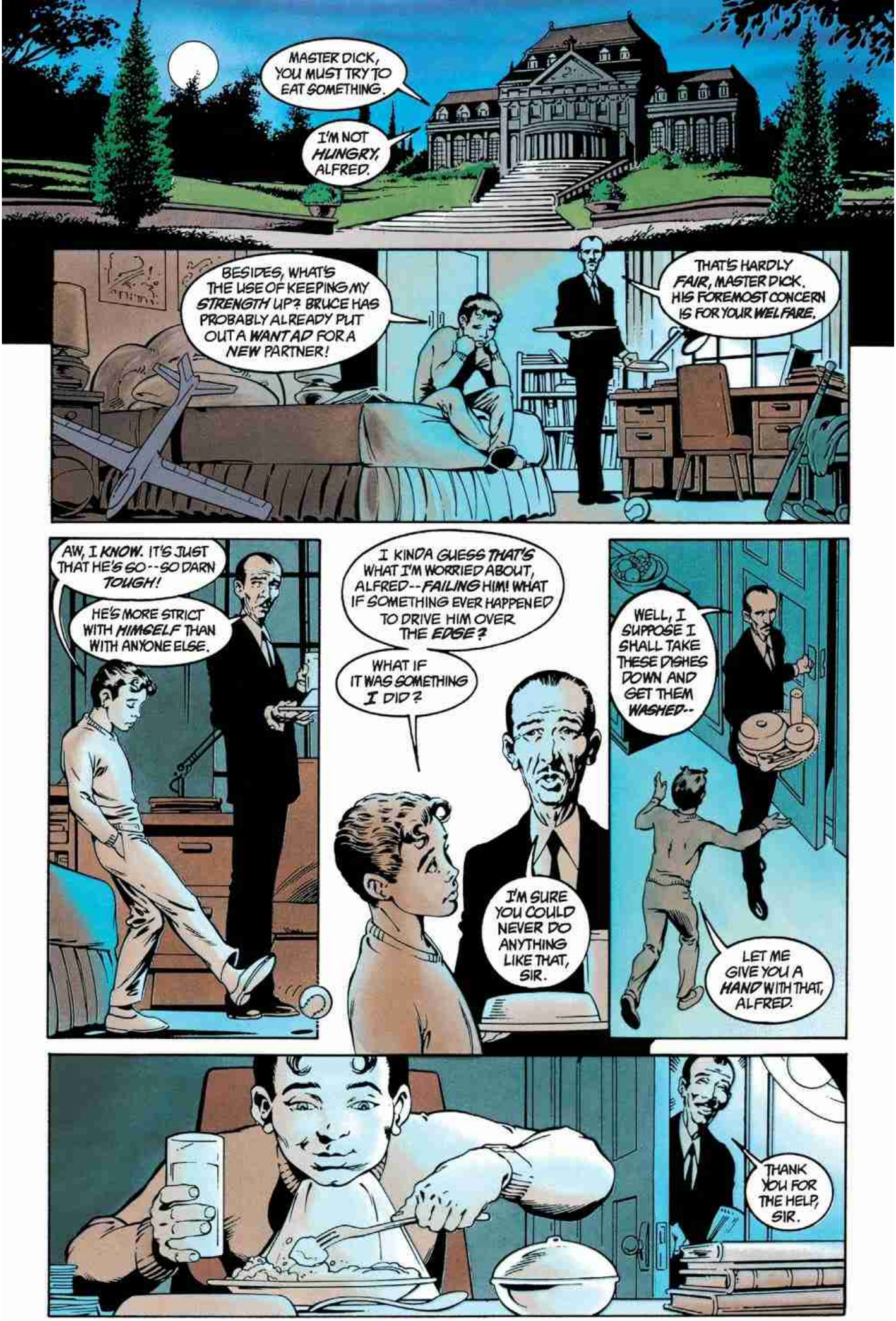

"...BUT HE DIDN'T. I DON'T KNOW WHY I THOUGHT HE WOULD. DAD HAD BEEN BROUGHT TO GOTHAM TO KILL HIM...
"...BUT STILL, I HOPED HE'D KILL THE BATMAN INSTEAD.
"BATMAN AND THE REAPER WERE GONE THEN. NO NEED FOR THEM TO HANG AROUND. CHILL WAS OUT OF THE WAY...
"...AND THAT WAS ALL THEY CARED ABOUT."
I DON'T UNDERSTAND ALL THE STORY, DADDY...
I DON'T EXPECT YOU TO, SON-- NOT NOW. BUT YOU WILL SOME DAY.
OF COURSE YOU WILL, JOEY...
...THE SAME WAY I UNDERSTOOD IT WHEN YOUR FATHER CAME TO ME, MONTHS AGO...
...I KNEW WHAT I HAD TO DO, JUST AS SURELY AS HE KNEW.


MASTER DICK, YOU MUST TRY TO EAT SOMETHING.
I'M NOT HUNGRY, ALFRED.
BESIDES, WHAT'S THE USE OF KEEPING MY STRENGTH UP? BRUCE HAS PROBABLY ALREADY PUT OUT A WANT AD FOR A NEW PARTNER!
THAT'S HARDLY FAIR, MASTER DICK. HIS FOREMOST CONCERN IS FOR YOUR WELFARE.
AW, I KNOW. IT'S JUST THAT HE'S SO--SO DARN TOUGH!
HE'S MORE STRICT WITH HIMSELF THAN WITH ANYONE ELSE.
I KINDA GUESS THAT'S WHAT I'M WORRIED ABOUT, ALFRED--FAILING HIM! WHAT IF SOMETHING EVER HAPPENED TO DRIVE HIM OVER THE EDGE?
WHAT IF IT WAS SOMETHING I DID?
I'M SURE YOU COULD NEVER DO ANYTHING LIKE THAT, SIR.
WELL, I SUPPOSE I SHALL TAKE THESE DISHES DOWN AND GET THEM WASHED--
LET ME GIVE YOU A HAND WITH THAT, ALFRED.
THANK YOU FOR THE HELP, SIR.



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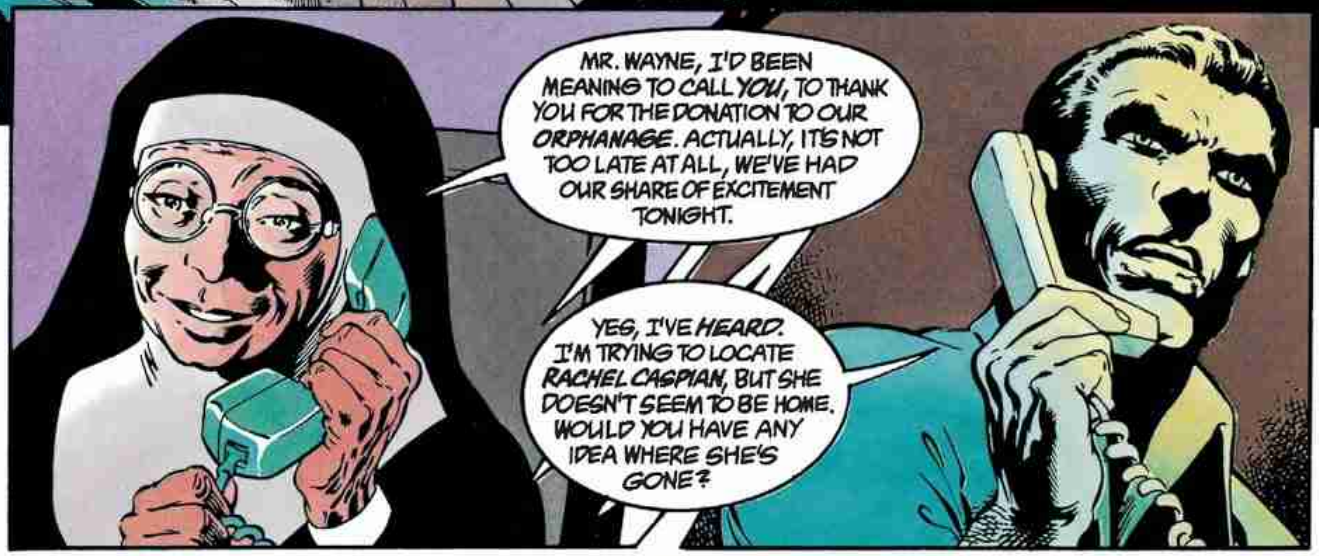
YES, MOTHER AGNES, IT'S BRUCE WAYNE. IS IT LATE? I LOSE TRACK OF TIME...


MR. WAYNE, I'D BEEN MEANING TO CALL YOU, TO THANK YOU FOR THE DONATION TO OUR ORPHANAGE. ACTUALLY, IT'S NOT TOO LATE AT ALL, WE'VE HAD OUR SHARE OF EXCITEMENT TONIGHT.
YES, I'VE HEARD. I'M TRYING TO LOCATE RACHEL CASPIAN, BUT SHE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE HOME. WOULD YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHERE SHE'S GONE?

I'M AFRAID NOT, MR. WAYNE. WE WERE POSITIVELY INUNDATED WITH THOSE AWFUL REPORTERS, YOU KNOW. WE'RE ALL QUITE WORRIED ABOUT HER.
THANK YOU, MOTHER AGNES.

SHE'S GONE, ALFRED.
I SHOULDN'T WONDER, SIR. SHE'S PROBABLY QUITE DISTRAUGHT, WHAT WITH HER RELATIONSHIP TO THE REAPER.
IT'S DIFFICULT FOR ME TO BELIEVE THE REAPER CAN ACTUALLY BE ALIVE, BUT AS YOU'VE OFTEN SAID, "BALLISTICS DON'T LIE."
BUT MEN DO. IT'S EASIER TO BELIEVE THAT SOMEONE FOUND THE REAPER'S BODY AND GUNS AND IS POSING AS HIM. YES, RACHEL WOULD BE DISTRAUGHT--
SNAP!
OF COURSE! THAT'S WHERE SHE'S GONE!
SPEAKING OF THOSE WHO ARE DISTRAUGHT, SIR, MASTER DICK IS ALSO AMONG THAT NUMBER.
HE'S GOT TO LEARN TO LIVE WITH CRITICISM, ALFRED.
OF COURSE, SIR, IT'S JUST THAT--THE BOY THINKS THE WORLD OF YOU, SIR.
THAT GOES BOTH WAYS, ALFRED. IMAGINE HOW I'D FEEL IF ANYTHING WERE TO HAPPEN TO HIM. HE NEEDS THE OUTLET FOR HIS ANGER--AN OUTLET I DIDN'T HAVE WHEN I WAS HIS AGE...
...BUT IF I THOUGHT I WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATH OF ANYONE I CARED FOR--I DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT WOULD DO TO ME, ALFRED.
I UNDERSTAND, SIR. GOOD HUNTING.
ALFRED.
SIR?
TAKE THE BOY A PIECE OF YOUR CHOCOLATE CAKE.
I SHALL BAKE ONE FRESH, SIR.

PARK ROW
THANK YOU FOR LETTING ME COME HERE, LESLIE...
...IF I HADN'T... IF I DIDN'T... IF I...
LESLIE, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO PRAY FOR! I THOUGHT MY FATHER MIGHT NOT BE DEAD... BUT IF HE'S A MURDERER--
YOU JUST LET ME DO ALL THE WORRYING, HONEY...
...I'LL DO WHAT I CAN.
KNOK NOK NOK
DON'T ANSWER!
IT WILL BE ALL RIGHT, DEAR.
LESLIE, IT'S BRUCE! IS RACHEL THERE?
BRUCE--!
JUST A MINUTE, BRUCE!
I KNEW YOU'D COME HERE!
I KNEW YOU'D COME!
RACHEL, I MAY NEVER HAVE TOLD YOU HOW I FEEL ABOUT--



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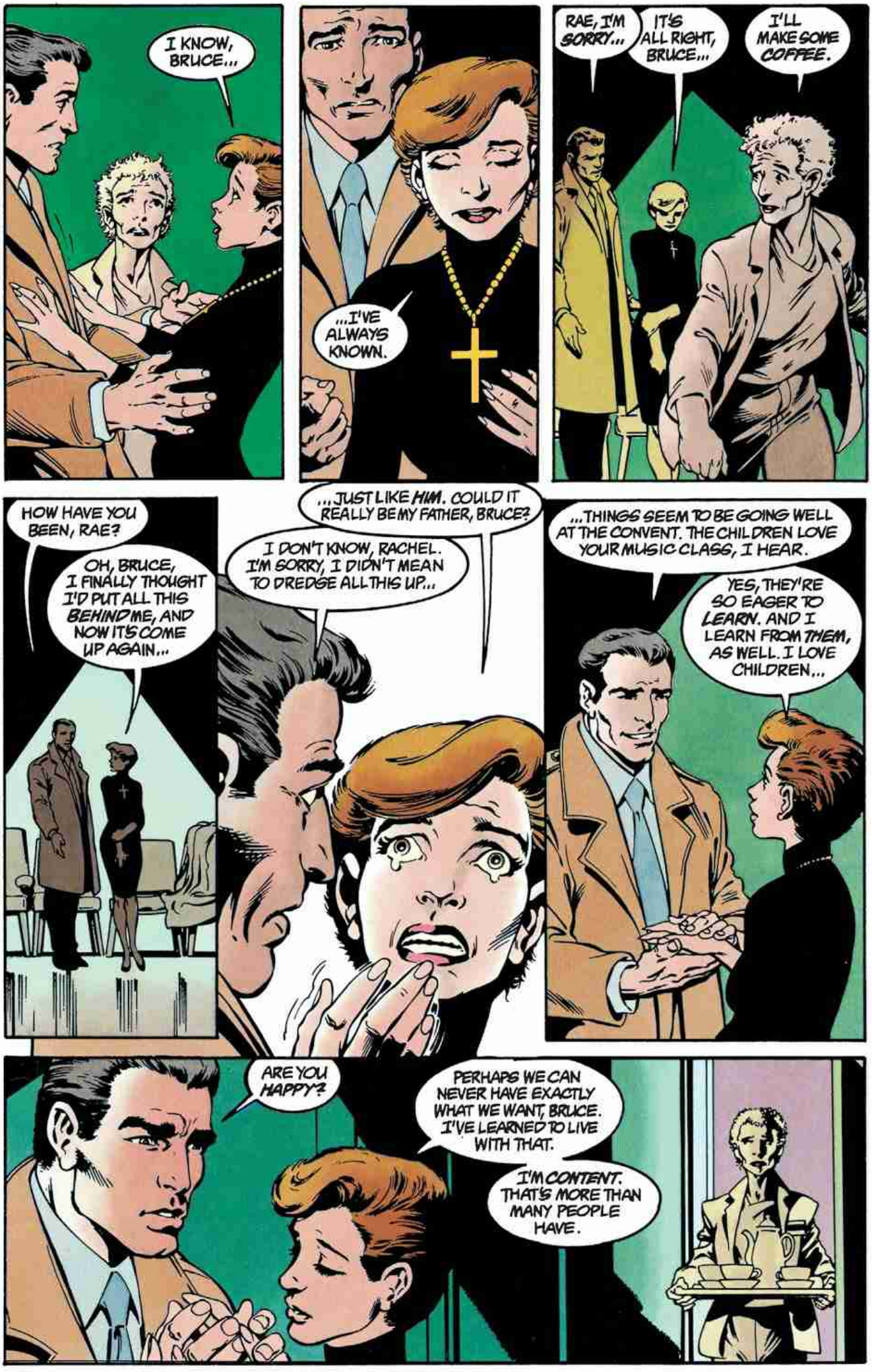
I KNOW, BRUCE...
...I'VE ALWAYS KNOWN.
RAE, I'M SORRY...
IT'S ALL RIGHT, BRUCE...
I'LL MAKE SOME COFFEE.
HOW HAVE YOU BEEN, RAE?
OH, BRUCE, I FINALLY THOUGHT I'D PUT ALL THIS BEHIND ME, AND NOW IT'S COME UP AGAIN...
I DON'T KNOW, RACHEL. I'M SORRY, I DIDN'T MEAN TO DREDGE ALL THIS UP...
...JUST LIKE HIM. COULD IT REALLY BE MY FATHER, BRUCE?
...THINGS SEEM TO BE GOING WELL AT THE CONVENT. THE CHILDREN LOVE YOUR MUSIC CLASS, I HEAR.
YES, THEY'RE SO EAGER TO LEARN. AND I LEARN FROM THEM, AS WELL. I LOVE CHILDREN...
ARE YOU HAPPY?
PERHAPS WE CAN NEVER HAVE EXACTLY WHAT WE WANT, BRUCE. I'VE LEARNED TO LIVE WITH THAT.
I'M CONTENT. THAT'S MORE THAN MANY PEOPLE HAVE.

HERE WE ARE. COME AND SIT DOWN, YOU-TWO...
I'M SORRY, LESLIE. I'M ABOUT TO COLLAPSE.
YOU POOR DEAR. I'VE PUT YOU IN THE GUEST ROOM, YOU KNOW WHERE IT IS.
GOOD NIGHT, RAE.
GOOD NIGHT, BRUCE. THANK YOU FOR COMING.
I'VE GOT TO GO, LESLIE. THERE'S WORK TO BE DONE.
I KNOW YOU'LL DO EVERYTHING YOU CAN TO HELP HER, BRUCE. THIS IS KILLING HER, AND--
NO! I FORBID YOU TO WEAR THAT-- THAT THING IN THIS HOUSE!
I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL, LESLIE...
...BUT THIS COSTUME -- AND WHAT IT REPRESENTS -- MAY BE RACHEL'S ONLY HOPE.

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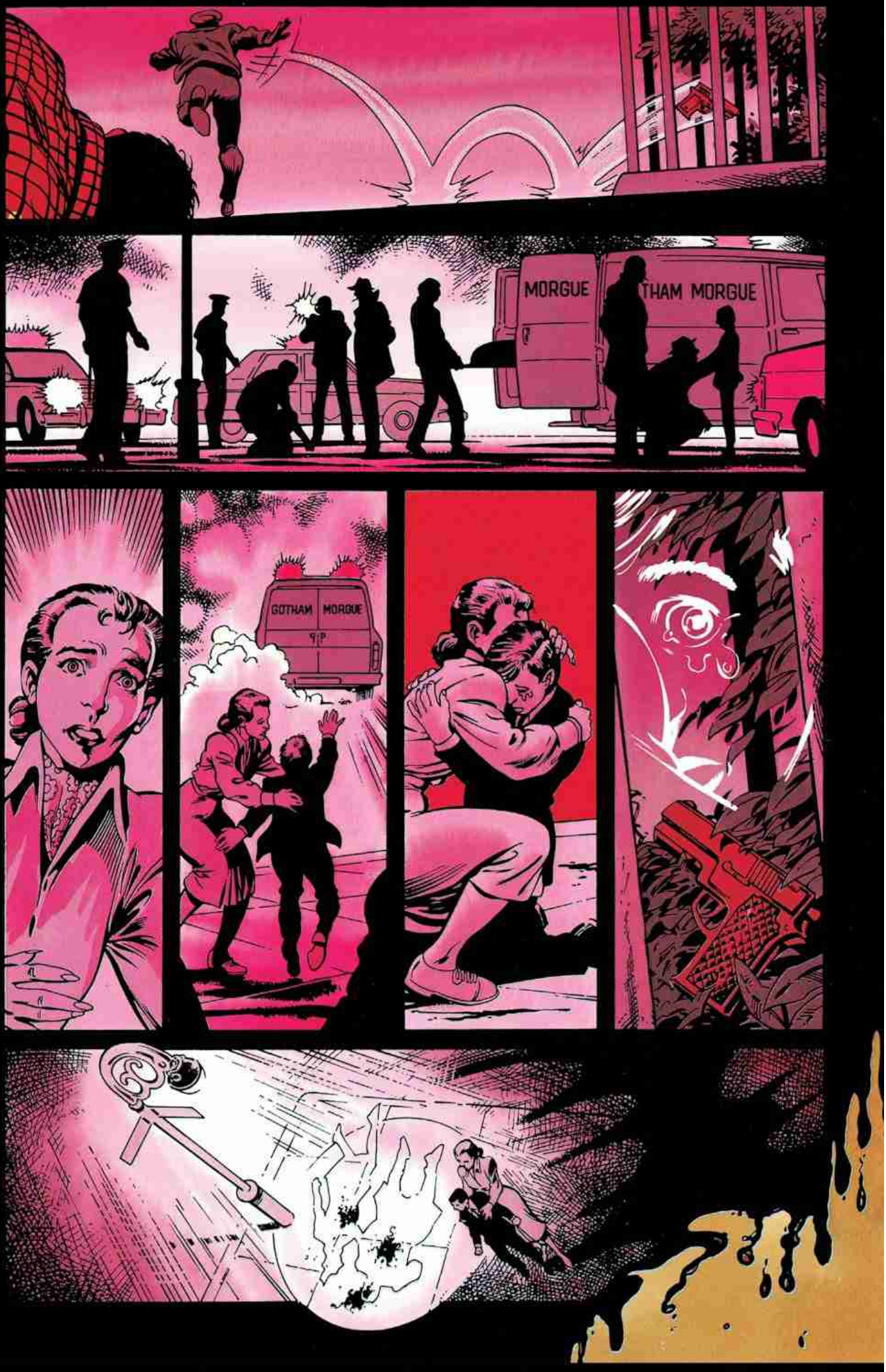


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GRAND OPENING
GOOD FOOD COLD BEER
THAT AIN'T TALCUM, THAT'S PURE!
THE CHECK-CASHIN' FEE AIN'T TWENTY-FIVE CENTS, IT'S TWENTY-FIVE PERCENT.
Y'KNOW, THIS LIGHT REALLY DOES SOMETHIN' T'YOUR EYES...
NOK NOK
KEEP YER TRUSS ON, MAC, WHERE'S THE FIRE?

EEP!
McSURLEY, IT'S--!
SLAM
WHUNK
I WASN'T AWARE I NEEDED A RESERVATION.
YOU'RE McSURLEY.
AND WHO MIGHT YOU BE?
JUST A JOKE! WHAT'LL IT BE, BATMAN?
I UNDERSTAND THERE'S A NEW BOY IN TOWN I HAVEN'T MET-- PROFILE.

HE'S SET UP IN THE BACK. RIGHT THIS WAY.
THUNK
RAK
KKT
YOU OUGHT TO HAVE THIS PLACE INSPECTED.
I'LL CALL THE LANDLORD T'MORROW.
YOU CAN'T BE PROFILE.
I'M MOOSE. MY JOB'S T'KEEP THE BOSS FROM BEIN' DISTURBED BY GUYS LIKE YOU.
WHY DON'T YOU ASK HIM? HE'S RIGHT BEHIND YOU.
HE IS?
NAW, HE--
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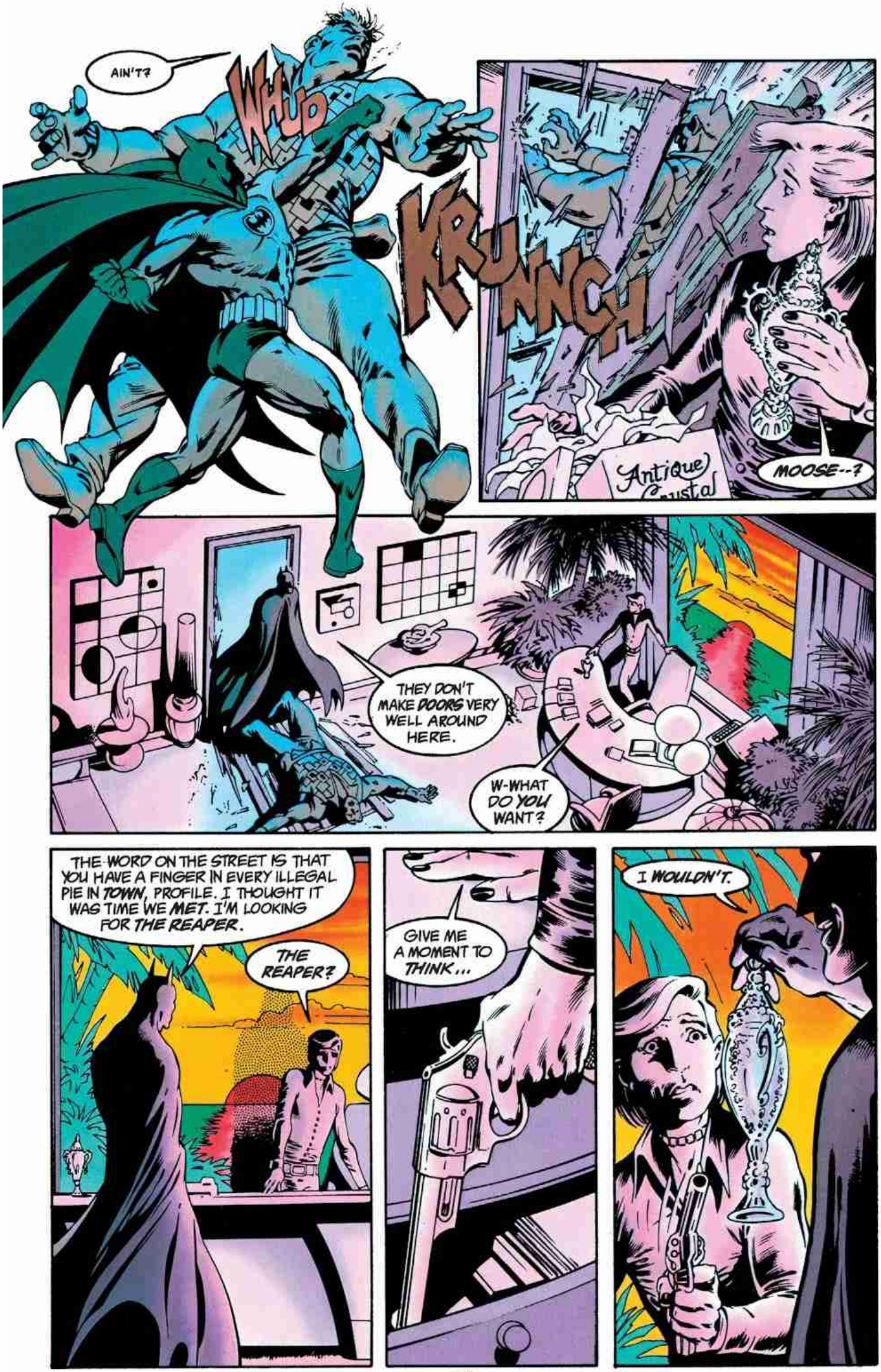
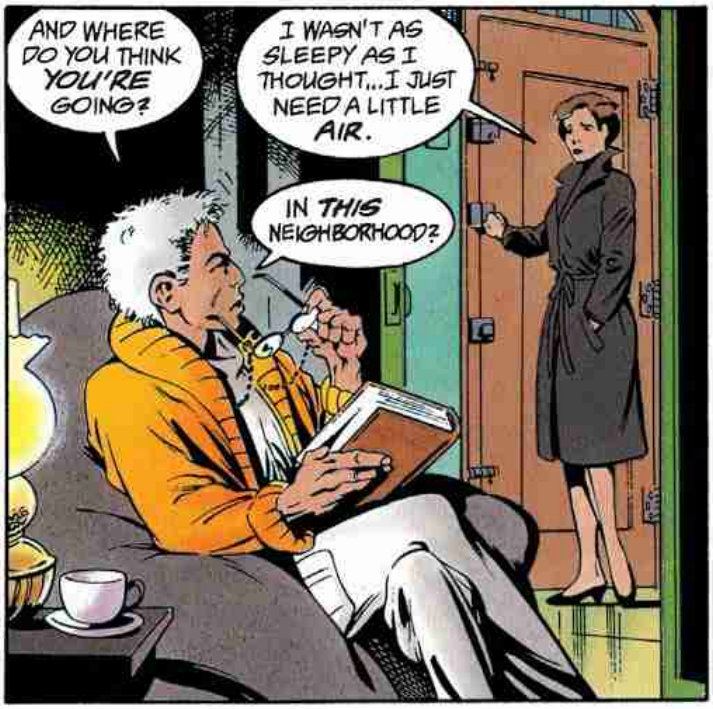
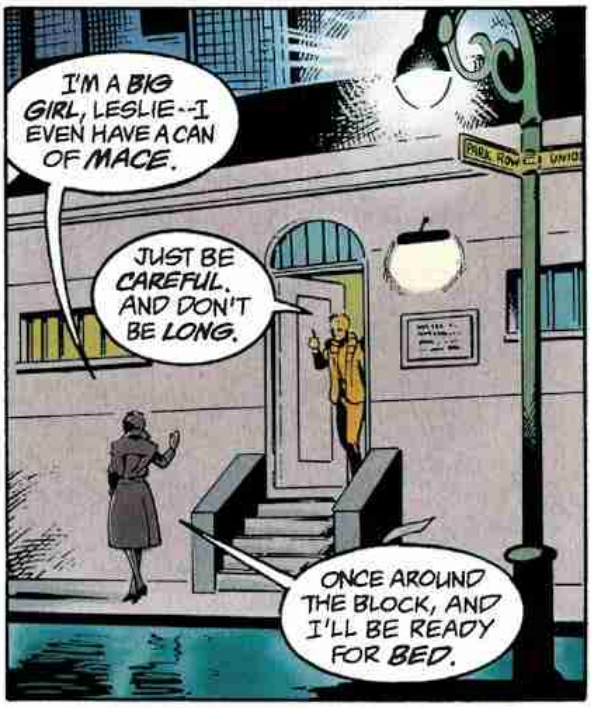

AIN'T?
WHUD
KRUNNCH
Antique Crystal
MOOSE--?
THEY DON'T MAKE DOORS VERY WELL AROUND HERE.
W-WHAT DO YOU WANT?
THE WORD ON THE STREET IS THAT YOU HAVE A FINGER IN EVERY ILLEGAL PIE IN TOWN, PROFILE. I THOUGHT IT WAS TIME WE MET. I'M LOOKING FOR THE REAPER.
THE REAPER?
GIVE ME A MOMENT TO THINK...
I WOULDN'T.

=Sigh= ALL I KNOW ABOUT THE REAPER IS THAT HE'S CUTTING UP MY GIRLS--AND CUTTING INTO MY PROFITS.
THEN WE BOTH WANT HIM STOPPED. TELL YOUR GIRLS TO KEEP THEIR EYES OPEN, AND--
BANG
SANG
AGGGGH--!
RHONDA, HAVE YOU TAKEN LEAVE OF YOUR SENSES--?
I THOUGHT HE WAS THE REAPER... I WAS COMING BACK FROM VISITING MIRANDA IN THE HOSPITAL...
...SHE DIDN'T MAKE IT.
THE POOR THING...
WE'LL GIVE YOU ANY HELP WE CAN, BATMAN...
...BATMAN?

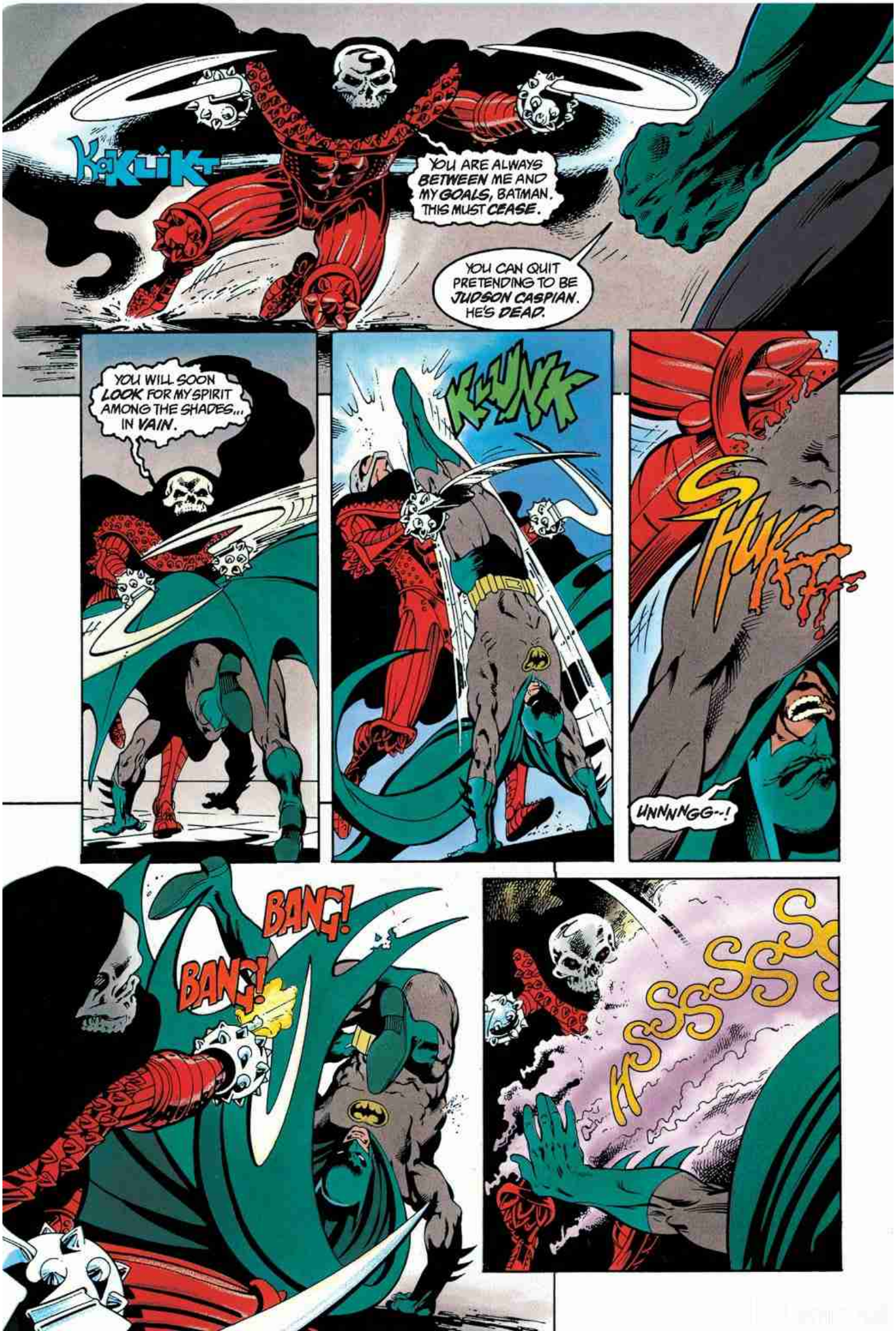
THAT GUN THE GIRL CARRIED--IT'S THE SAME MODEL AS THE ONE THAT KILLED MY PARENTS! I KEPT IT FOR YEARS AFTER JOE CHILL LOST IT...
"...AND BROUGHT IT OUT AGAIN WHEN CHILL RESURFACED! I'LL NEVER KNOW WHETHER I WOULD HAVE KILLED HIM OR NOT--THE REAPER BEAT ME TO IT...
ERECTED 19
WAYNE FOUNDATION BUILDING
"...BUT I TRIED TO BURY CHILL'S GHOST FOREVER BY BURYING HIS GUN IN THE FOUNDATION OF THE BUILDING DEDICATED TO MY PARENTS' MEMORY..."

IF THIS SECOND "REAPER" KNOWS SO MUCH ABOUT THE ORIGINAL, HE MAY KNOW WHERE THE GUN IS, AND MAY WANT TO USE IT-- AND WHAT IT REPRESENTS--AGAINST ME.
I'LL BE WAITING.


AND WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING?
I WASN'T AS SLEEPY AS I THOUGHT...I JUST NEED A LITTLE AIR.
IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD?

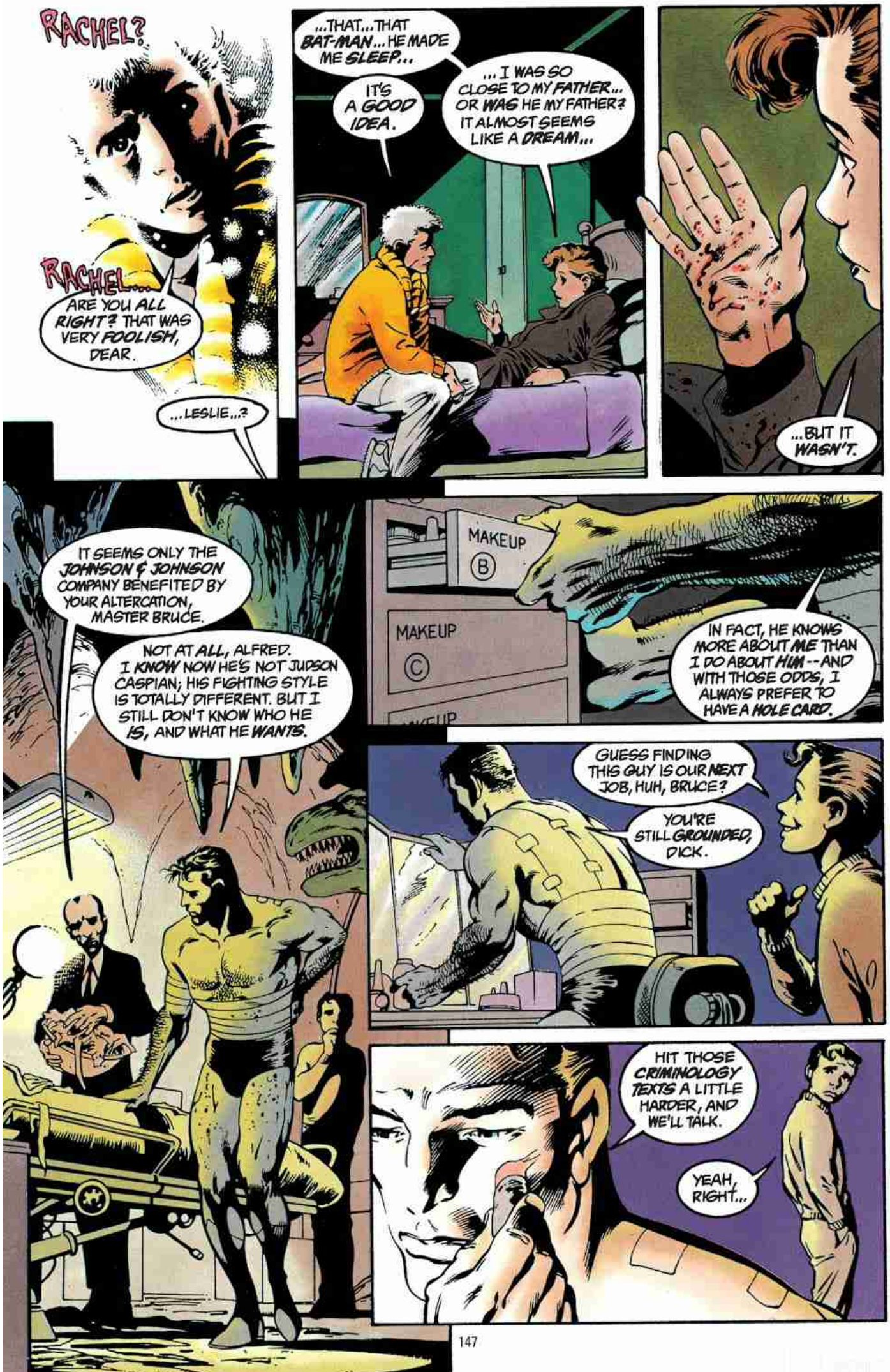

I'M A BIG GIRL, LESLIE--I EVEN HAVE A CAN OF MACE.
JUST BE CAREFUL. AND DON'T BE LONG.
ONCE AROUND THE BLOCK, AND I'LL BE READY FOR BED.

THIS IS A BUSINESS AREA, IT'S USUALLY DESERTED AT NIGHT. WHO'S DOWN THERE...?
IT WAS FOOLISH OF ME TO COME HERE. FATHER'S DEAD, HE MUST BE...
ERECTED 19
WAYNE FOUNDATION BUILDING
...BUT IF HE ISN'T...
THIS IS DEVOTION INDEED, MY DAUGHTER...
WHO--?
IN YOUR HEART, YOU KNOW WHO I AM. THE WORLD THOUGHT I PERISHED HERE, BUT YOU KNEW BETTER.
F-FATHER...?
I SO WANT IT TO BE YOU...
IT IS, RACHEL. COME TO ME, PLEASE. YOU ARE THE ONLY THING THAT MATTERS, SINCE THE DEATH OF YOUR DEAR MOTHER.
DON'T TOUCH HER!
THUD!


KaKLiK
YOU ARE ALWAYS BETWEEN ME AND MY GOALS, BATMAN. THIS MUST CEASE.
YOU CAN QUIT PRETENDING TO BE JUDSON CASPIAN. HE'S DEAD.
YOU WILL SOON LOOK FOR MY SPIRIT AMONG THE SHADES... IN VAIN.
KUNK
SHUK
UNNNGG--!
BANG!
BANG!
SSSSSS

RRRRIP
CHOP!
DON'T HURT HIM...!
HE'S NOT YOUR FATH--
SKSSSSSH
LET ME GO--!
AT THIS RATE, YOU'LL GET US BOTH KILLED!
skrk
WAYNE FOUNDATION BUILDING

WHOM
MAYN
TIK TIK TIK
HA HA HA H
HE WOULDN'T HAVE HURT ME, MY FATHER WOULD NEVER--
THAT'S NOT YOUR FATHER, MISS CASPIAN! BUT UNTIL YOU BELIEVE THAT--
--YOU'RE IN MORE DANGER THAN I AM.
OHHHHHHHHH
FSSSST


RACHEL?
RACHEL...
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? THAT WAS VERY FOOLISH, DEAR.
...LESLIE...?
...THAT...THAT BAT-MAN... HE MADE ME SLEEP...
IT'S A GOOD IDEA.
...I WAS SO CLOSE TO MY FATHER... OR WAS HE MY FATHER? IT ALMOST SEEMS LIKE A DREAM...
...BUT IT WASN'T.
IT SEEMS ONLY THE JOHNSON & JOHNSON COMPANY BENEFITED BY YOUR ALTERCATION, MASTER BRUCE.
NOT AT ALL, ALFRED. I KNOW NOW HE'S NOT JUDSON CASPIAN; HIS FIGHTING STYLE IS TOTALLY DIFFERENT. BUT I STILL DON'T KNOW WHO HE IS, AND WHAT HE WANTS.
MAKEUP
B
MAKEUP
C
IN FACT, HE KNOWS MORE ABOUT ME THAN I DO ABOUT HIM--AND WITH THOSE ODDS, I ALWAYS PREFER TO HAVE A HOLE CARD.
GUESS FINDING THIS GUY IS OUR NEXT JOB, HUH, BRUCE?
YOU'RE STILL GROUNDED, DICK.
HIT THOSE CRIMINOLOGY TEXTS A LITTLE HARDER, AND WE'LL TALK.
YEAH, RIGHT...

HI, DAD! WHATCHA GOT?
WHAT I WENT FOR, CHAMP...
...THIS. THIS IS THE GUN YOUR GRANDFATHER OWNED. I WATCHED THE BATMAN HIDE IT, THE NIGHT HE DIED. BATMAN TRIED TO STOP ME, BUT I GAVE HIM WHAT-FOR.
WOW, COOL...
DAD, LEMME SEE--
I DON'T WANT YOU TOUCHING IT, SON. I SHOULDN'T HAVE SHOWN IT TO YOU.
WHY NOT?
I DON'T WANT YOU TOUCHED BY WHAT I'M DOING HERE. WHEN I'VE DONE WHAT I HAVE TO DO, IT'LL BE OVER, DO YOU UNDERSTAND?
I GUESS...
AND HOW MUCH LONGER WILL THAT BE, JOSEPH?
I'M NOT SURE, MARCIA. AS SOON AS THE BATMAN FINDS ME, I GUESS.
DON'T WAIT FOR HIM TO TAKE ACTION, INITIATE YOUR OWN PLAN!
HOW?
YOU SAID YOU FOUGHT HIM TONIGHT. WHY DIDN'T YOU CAPTURE HIM?
I RAN ACROSS RACHEL CASPIAN-- SHE THOUGHT I WAS HER FATHER. BATMAN TOOK OFF TO PROTECT HER.
THAT'S IT, THEN. FIND HER, AND WE'LL HAVE HIM.
YOU THINK SO, HUH?
I KNOW SO. AND I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE WHAT THIS DOES TO HIM!

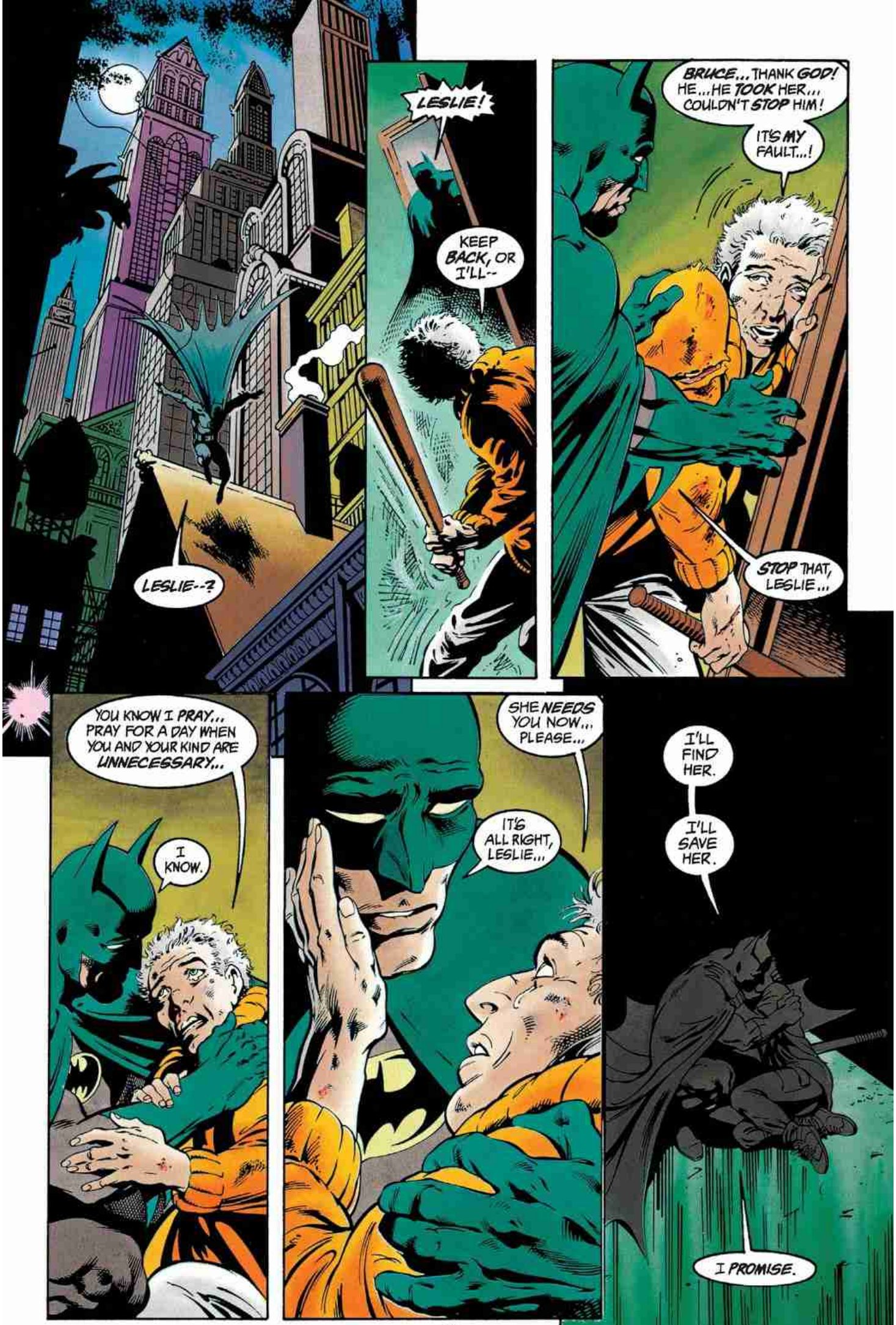
SISTERS OF MERCY CONVENT
REDIAL
BEEP
EEP
EEP
BEEP
EEP
EEP
EEP
HELLO, WAYNE CLINIC, MAY I HELP YOU?
HELLO...?

RACHEL? DON'T LAUGH, BUT I BROUGHT YOU A CUP OF WARM MILK...
NOK NOK
LESLIE!

WHAT ARE YOU HIDING THERE?
NOTHING.
DON'T YOU LIE TO ME, YOUNG LADY...

YOU'RE UP TO SOMETHING, AND I MEAN TO FIND OUT--
NO!
I... I FOUND THESE CLOTHES IN A BOX IN THE CLOSET--
SOME OF MY "CLIENTS" STAY OVER OCCASIONALLY.
MY FATHER... HE'S KILLING THOSE POOR GIRLS... I THOUGHT IF I COULD FIND HIM, TALK TO HIM...
HE SAID NOT TO LET YOU GO OUT, RACHEL. IT'S TOO DANGEROUS!
"HE"? YOU MEAN THE BATMAN, DON'T YOU? HOW DO YOU KNOW HIM, LESLIE? WHAT IS HE TO YOU?
NOTHING HE'D WANT YOU TO KNOW. NOW GET CLEANED UP.
YES, MA'AM.
SPEAK OF THE DEVIL...
NOK NOK
DID YOU FORGET THE SPECIAL KNOCK YOU TOLD ME YOU'D--

EEEEEEK
MEMBERS ONLY
YOU ALL WANT THE REAPER OFF THE STREETS AS MUCH AS I DO...
CLOSED FOR PRIVATE PARTY
...AND THESE WHISTLES WILL MAKE IT EASY FOR YOU TO SUMMON ME. THE INSTANT YOU SEE THE REAPER, JUST--
YES?
BLINK
HE WHAT?


LESLIE--?
LESLIE!
KEEP BACK, OR I'LL--
BRUCE... THANK GOD! HE...HE TOOK HER... COULDN'T STOP HIM!
IT'S MY FAULT...!
STOP THAT, LESLIE...
YOU KNOW I PRAY... PRAY FOR A DAY WHEN YOU AND YOUR KIND ARE UNNECESSARY...
I KNOW.
SHE NEEDS YOU NOW... PLEASE...
IT'S ALL RIGHT, LESLIE...
I'LL FIND HER.
I'LL SAVE HER.
I PROMISE.



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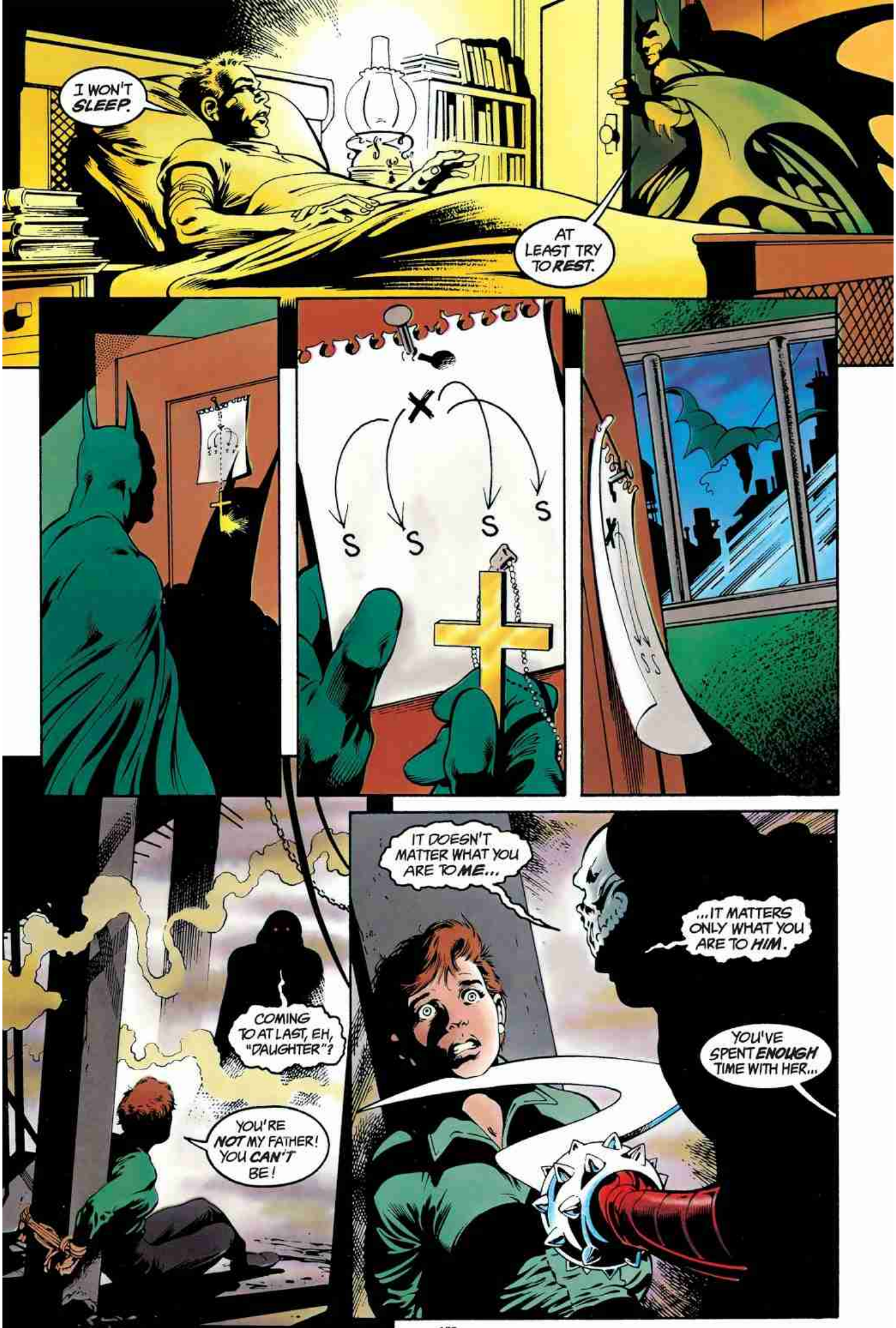
I WON'T SLEEP.
AT LEAST TRY TO REST.
S S S S
COMING TO AT LAST, EH, "DAUGHTER"?
YOU'RE NOT MY FATHER! YOU CAN'T BE!
IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT YOU ARE TO ME...
...IT MATTERS ONLY WHAT YOU ARE TO HIM.
YOU'VE SPENT ENOUGH TIME WITH HER...

...IS EVERYTHING READY?
IT'LL NEVER BE READIER. I JUST WISH WE HADN'T LEFT JOEY ALONE.
KEEP YOUR MIND ON THE TASK HERE, DON'T WORRY ABOUT HIM.
HE'S MY SON--!
AND HE'S MY NEPHEW! THAT MAKES HIM A CHILL, DOESN'T IT...?
"...TRUST ME, HE'S HIS FATHER'S SON...
"...HE'LL BE FINE."

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WHAT--?
THWPT
THWPT
THWPT
WAKE UP!
WHY DID YOU DO THAT? I COULD'VE BEATEN HIM!
SURE HE COULD'VE! I KNOW HE COULD'VE!
HE WOULD'VE HAD YOU, AND YOU KNOW IT, JOSEPH! BUT THAT DOESN'T MATTER NOW!
ALL THAT MATTERS IS THAT WE HAVE TRIUMPHED! AND NOW TO SEE HIS FACE AT LAST...!
WELL, HE'S NO ONE I'VE EVER SEEN! ARE YOU SATISFIED?
I AM! THIS MASK HID HIS IDENTITY IN LIFE...
...LET IT CONTINUE TO DO SO IN DEATH.
SHAKE

WH-WHAT DO YOU WANT, "REAPER"?
DO YOU MEAN "WHY AM I NOT DEAD?" I WISH YOU TO VIEW AN AMUSEMENT I HAVE PREPARED FOR YOU, BATMAN...
...AND I HAVE PROVIDED A FEW SAFEGUARDS TO ASSURE YOUR FULL ATTENTION--SIMPLE, AND THEREFORE EXTREMELY EFFICIENT.
SHOULD YOU LEAVE THIS PLATFORM FOR ANY REASON, YOU WILL HANG YOURSELF...
...AND SHOULD THAT NOT KILL YOU, THAT EXTREMELY VIRULENT ACID WILL.
CAN WE JUST GET ON WITH IT?
MY VERY THOUGHT.
YOUR TIMING IS PERFECT. THE PSYCHOACTIVE DRUG OUGHT TO BE KICKING IN...
"...ANY SECOND NOW."
C'MON, YOU GUYS...
...THE ICE CREAM STORE'LL CLOSE IF WE DON'T--
SHUDD UP, PUNK...
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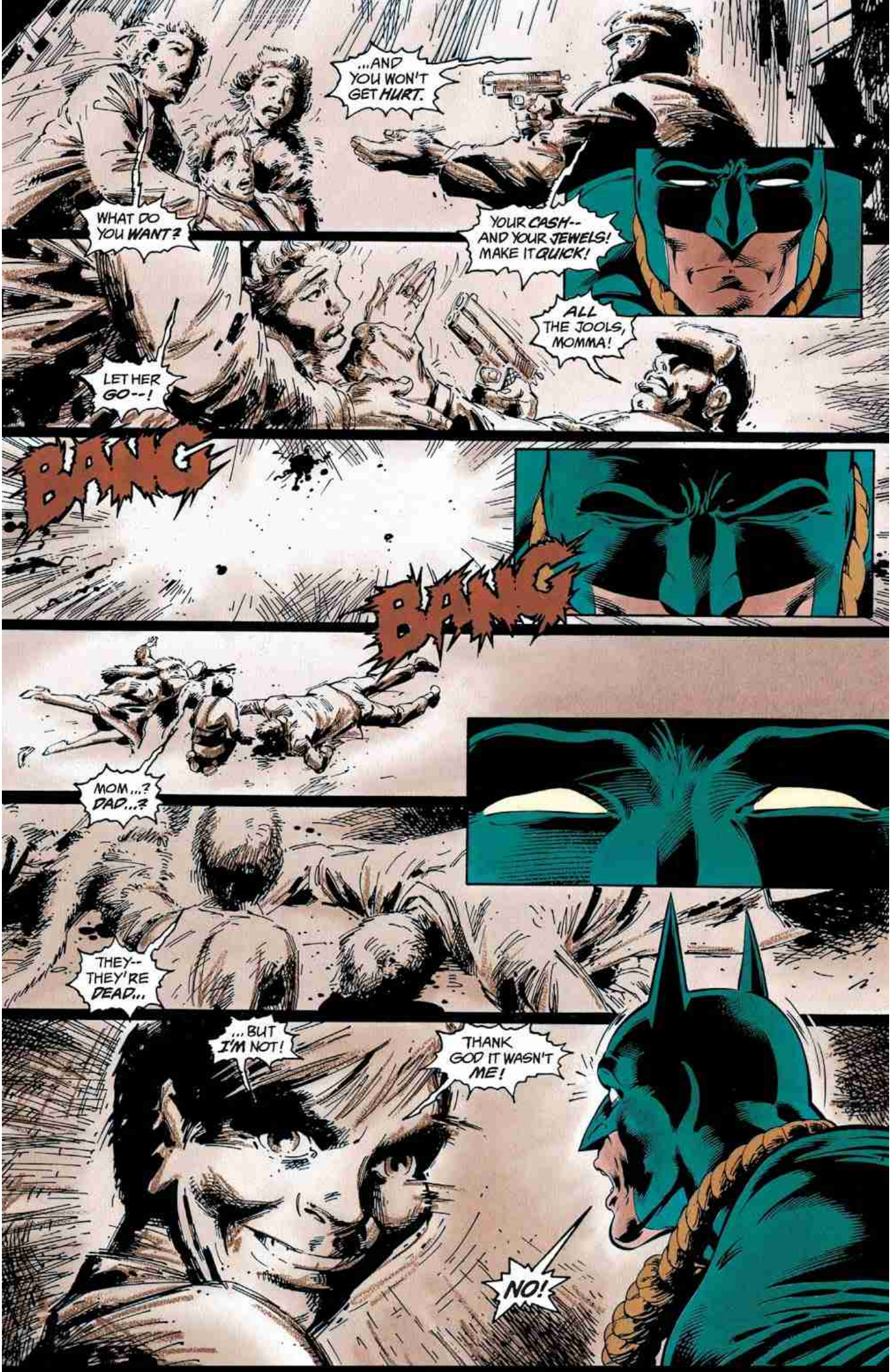


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IT DIDN'T HAPPEN LIKE THAT...
C'MON, YOU GUYS...
I BELIEVE OUR FILM'S HAVING SOME EFFECT ALREADY... THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN MUCH SIMPLER IF WE KNEW HIS REAL IDENTITY.
BATMAN SAID ONLY THAT DAD KILLED HIS PARENTS, HE NEVER TOLD HIM HIS NAME.
WELL, IT DOESN'T MATTER. "SURVIVOR'S GUILT" HAS TAKEN ITS TOLL ON SURVIVORS OF CONCENTRATION CAMPS AND DISASTERS, MAKING THEM DOUBT THEIR RIGHT TO LIVE WHILE THEY WATCHED THEIR LOVED ONES DIE...
"...THERE'S NO REASON WHY IT SHOULDN'T BREAK HIM."
THANK GOD IT WASN'T ME!
COME IN, PLEASE, COME--
NO USE, MASTER DICK. THERE'S BEEN NO SIGN OF MASTER BRUCE SINCE HE LEFT DR. THOMPKINS.
SOMETHING'S GONE WRONG, ALFRED...
BE THAT AS IT MAY, SIR, WE HAVE OUR ORDERS: "THEY ALSO SERVE," YOU KNOW.
SERVE, SCHMERVE! BRUCE IS IN TROUBLE...
...AND HE NEEDS MY HELP.



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I MUST ABSOLUTELY FORBID THIS, MASTER DICK! MASTER BRUCE WAS MOST EMPHATIC ABOUT THE CURTAILING OF YOUR UNIFORMED ACTIVITIES!
YEAH, I KNOW, ALFRED...
...BUT SOMEBODY'S GOTTA DO SOMETHING!
MASTER DICK--!
RMMMNNNNN
BE CAREFUL, SIR...
...GOOD FORTUNE...!
THIS DIAGRAM DR. THOMPKINS DESCRIBED HAS GOTTA BE A CLUE... BRUCE SAYS THESE LOSERS CAN NEVER SAY ANYTHING IN ONE WORD IF THEY CAN TAKE FIVE...
...PLUS, IT KEEPS EVERYBODY ELSE OUTTA THEIR HAIR, TOO... UNLESS YOU CAN DOPE IT OUT...
"S" MUST MEAN SOUTH...SO HE'S SOMEWHERE WHERE THE ONLY DIRECTION YOU CAN GO IS SOUTH...
...HE CAN'T BE AT THE NORTH POLE...
S S S S
...SO HE MUST BE AT THE GOTHAM CITY VERSION OF THE NORTH POLE...
WROOOOOOOOOOOOMMM

OPENING SOON
NORTHPOINT MALL
BINGO.
THANK GOD IT WASN'T ME!
WHY? WHY DID THEY DIE, AND NOT ME...?
IT SHOULDN'T BE LONG NOW. THE COMBINED EFFECT OF THE DRUG AND THE FILM HAVE MADE HIM HATE HIS LIFE ...AND OUR TRAP WILL MAKE IT EASY FOR HIM TO END IT!
THEN I SUPPOSE IT'S TIME TO PUT OUR CARDS ON THE TABLE, JOSEPH...
...GET HIM OUT OF THAT DEVICE -- NOW!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, MARCIA? OUR REVENGE...!
"REVENGE"? I DON'T GIVE A DAMN ABOUT THE DEATH OF SOME PETTY THUG WHO ABUSED MY MOTHER!
BUT THE MONEY TO BE HAD FROM TURNING THE BATMAN OVER TO MORGAN JONES ... I GIVE A VERY LARGE DAMN ABOUT THAT!

THIS WAS YOUR IDEA, JOSEPH, AND I THANK YOU... THESE ARMOR-PIERCING BULLETS WILL MAKE IT VERY QUICK.
HA HA HA HA HA
clik clik clik
I FELT YOUR CONTEMPT... SUSPECTED YOUR DUPLICITY...
KAKLIK
...AND UNLOADED YOUR GUN!
SLSSSH
CHAK
GAAAAHH--
HAVE YOU SEEN BATMAN?
HE'S... HE'S BEEN CAPTURED!
SO--!
UH OH...!

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REAPER...

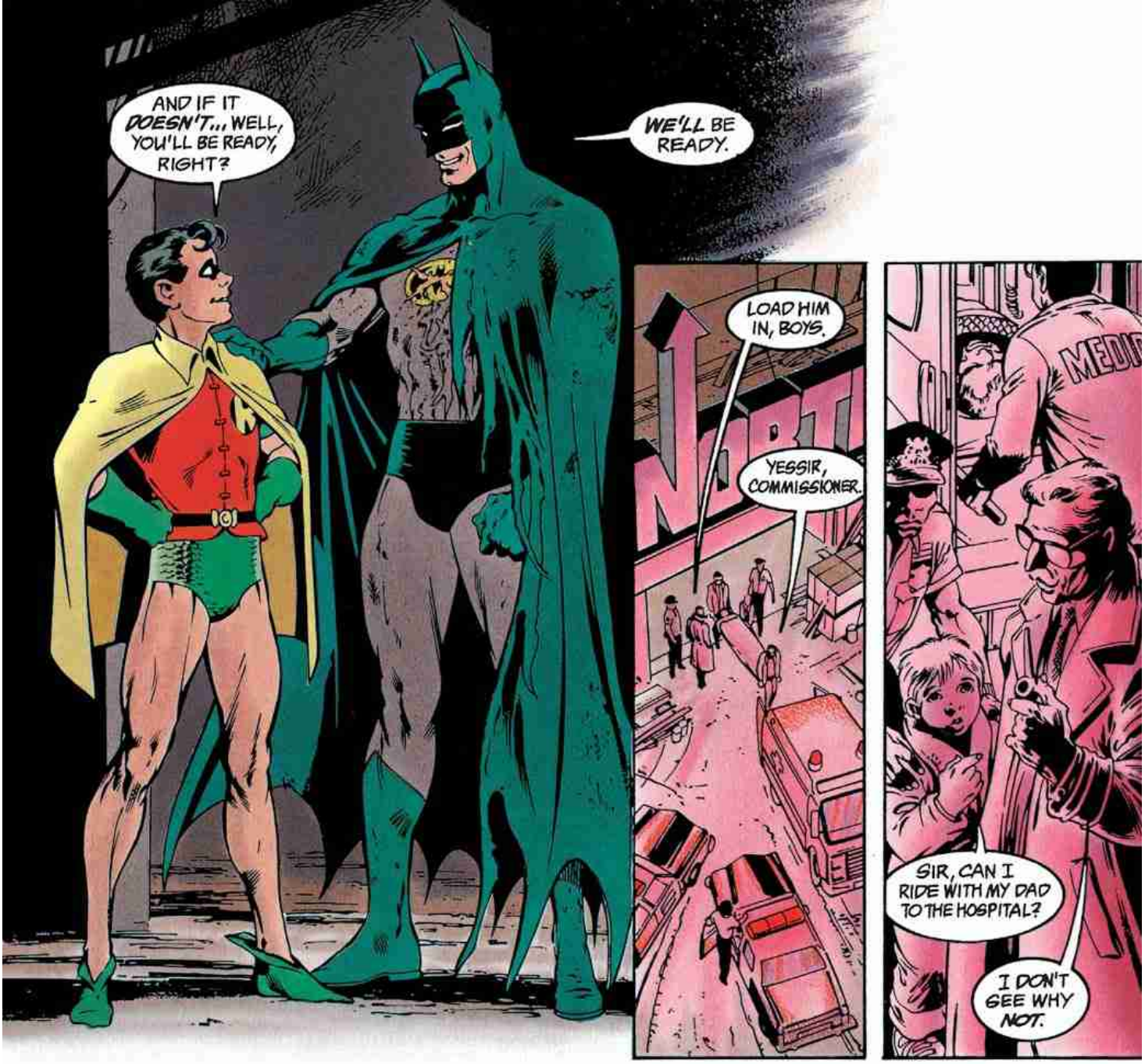
...LEAVE THE BOY ALONE.
GET HIM, BATMAN!
SEE TO MISS CASPIAN, ROBIN.
GET HIM, DAD!
YOU ESCAPED.
BOTH OF YOUR TRAPS.
SKrK
I'M GLAD.
RRRRIP
UNGGH!
WHAP
CHOP

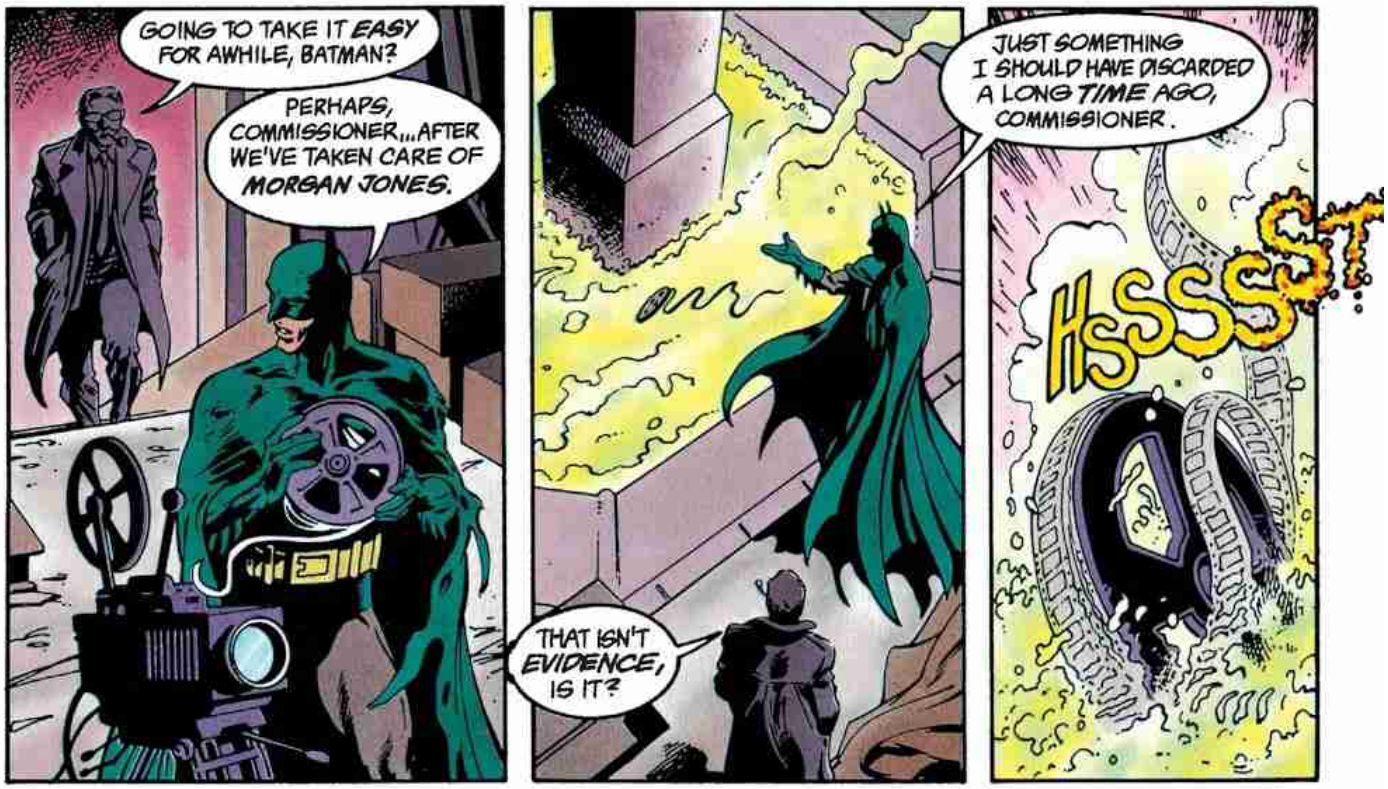
KTANG KTANG KTANG KTANG KTANG
AGGGH!
BANG!
SPWEEE
ZINNNG
BANG!
BANG!
PWNG
Spak

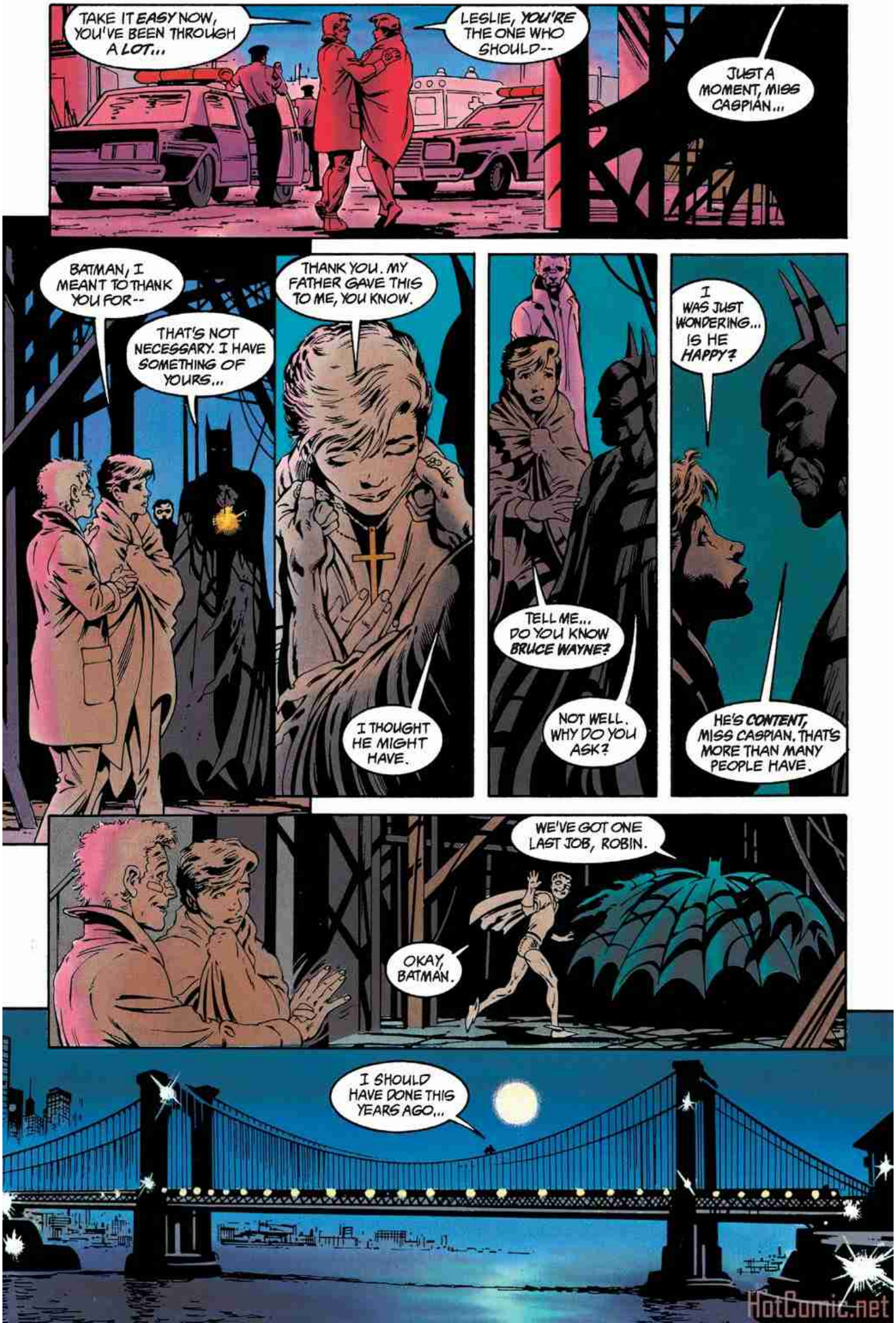
CAN'T YOU STOP THEM?
THE REAPER STARTED IT!
WOK

BLAM
HE'S NO ONE-- NO ONE I KNOW.
HOW COULD SOMEONE HATE ME SO MUCH WITHOUT MY KNOWING WHO--
IT DOESN'T MATTER WHO HE IS. DROP HIM, BATMAN. HE DESERVES IT.
NO!
CKRKKK
KRSSSH

WHO ARE YOU, SON?
LET GO OF ME!
SHOULD I LET GO OF HIM, TOO?
NO!
PLEASE... HE'S MY FATHER...
...MY NAME IS JOEY... JOEY CHILL...
GOOD LORD.
IT'S ALL RIGHT, SON.
THANKS, MISTER.
BUT, BATMAN...
...WHAT IF HE COMES BACK?
I'LL WORRY ABOUT THAT THEN, ROBIN.
IT'S COME FULL CIRCLE AT LAST... IT BEGAN WITH HIS FATHER AND MINE...
...AND, HOPEFULLY, IT WILL END WITH HIS SON.


AND IF IT DOESN'T... WELL, YOU'LL BE READY, RIGHT?
WE'LL BE READY.
LOAD HIM IN, BOYS.
YESSIR, COMMISSIONER.
SIR, CAN I RIDE WITH MY DAD TO THE HOSPITAL?
I DON'T SEE WHY NOT.


GOING TO TAKE IT EASY FOR AWHILE, BATMAN?
PERHAPS, COMMISSIONER... AFTER WE'VE TAKEN CARE OF MORGAN JONES.
THAT ISN'T EVIDENCE, IS IT?
JUST SOMETHING I SHOULD HAVE DISCARDED A LONG TIME AGO, COMMISSIONER.
HSSSSS!


TAKE IT EASY NOW, YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH A LOT...
LESLIE, YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SHOULD--
JUST A MOMENT, MISS CASPIAN...
BATMAN, I MEANT TO THANK YOU FOR--
THAT'S NOT NECESSARY. I HAVE SOMETHING OF YOURS...
THANK YOU. MY FATHER GAVE THIS TO ME, YOU KNOW.
I THOUGHT HE MIGHT HAVE.
TELL ME... DO YOU KNOW BRUCE WAYNE?
NOT WELL. WHY DO YOU ASK?
I WAS JUST WONDERING... IS HE HAPPY?
HE'S CONTENT, MISS CASPIAN. THAT'S MORE THAN MANY PEOPLE HAVE.
WE'VE GOT ONE LAST JOB, ROBIN.
OKAY, BATMAN.
I SHOULD HAVE DONE THIS YEARS AGO...
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# ON THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS

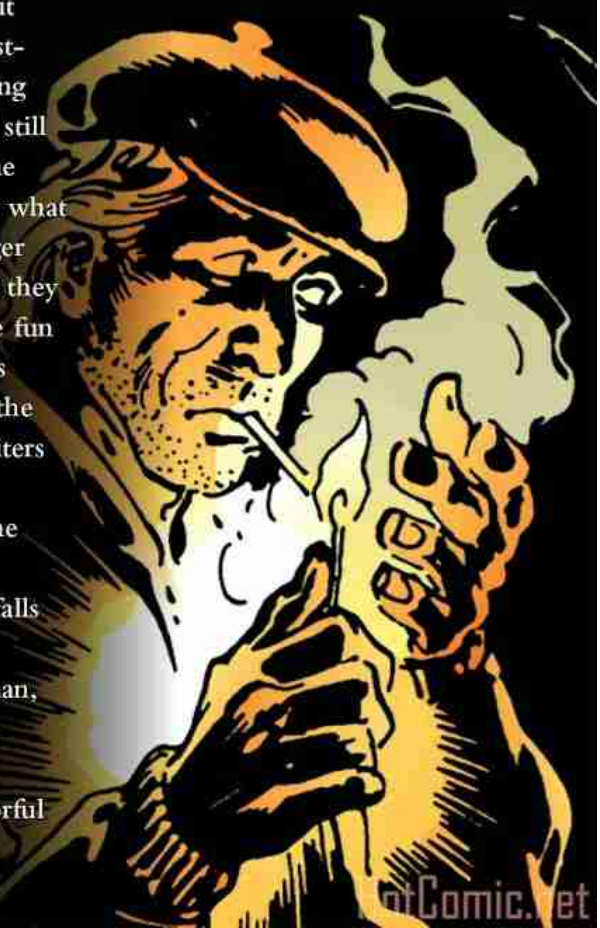
## by MIKE W. BARR

*"If I have been able to see further, it was only because I stood on the shoulders of giants."* That was Sir Isaac Newton, famed 18th century mathematician, author of the theory of gravity (he of the possibly apocryphal fallen apple tale), and no shrinking violet himself.

I know how he feels. Bob Kane, who brought Bill Finger on board as the first writer, created Batman in 1939. They created such memorable characters as the Joker, Catwoman, the Scarecrow, the Penguin, and hordes of others, not least among them Robin, the Boy Wonder. Nearly three-quarters of a century later, all of these characters—and the concept of Batman himself—are still going strong, a testament to the fact that Kane and Finger—and the creators who followed them, like Gardner Fox, Alvin Schwartz, Dick Sprang and Lew Sayre Schwartz, to name just a few—were on to something. They left thousands of stories and characters for future Batman writers and artists—*chroniclers*, to get precious about it—to use and, more importantly, they left a lot of inspiration behind for future storytellers to add their own wrinkles to the legend of Batman.

Not that they would have seen it that way. The early writers and artists of Batman were mostly lower-middle-class kids who didn't want to spend their lives in the same largely dead-end jobs that their fathers, brothers and uncles had. They looked for a way out, and found one in the then-new medium of comics, working with their fingers and their minds instead of their backs. Not that writing and drawing professional comics isn't a lot of work, but on its worst day it's still better than a lot of jobs. But those first-generation creators didn't see their labors as a legacy or ongoing tradition of any type, let alone believe that their stories would still be in print decades later. It fell to a later generation of fans, the creators who followed Kane and Finger, and all the rest to see what had been done first as a *tradition*. In their own eyes, Kane, Finger and the rest were just hammering out the stories as quickly as they could, trying to make them good, to make a buck, and to have fun doing it (mostly in that order). Those first comic book creators were making it up as they went along, taking their cues from the pulp series of the day like *The Shadow* and *Doc Savage*, and writers like Walter B. Gibson and Lester Dent (who were themselves taking their cues from writers like Arthur Conan Doyle and the Baroness Orczy, who were taking their cues from Edgar Allan Poe...). The first generation may establish the tradition, but it falls to later generations to acknowledge and continue it.

Which is where I come in. My desire, when writing Batman, was to create stories in the traditions of Finger, Fox and Alvin Schwartz. Stories full of action and inescapable deathtraps, a dollop of detection, Batman and Robin's relationship, and colorful



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villains—using established foes when they worked, but hopefully also adding something new to the mix. You can't just cut the lumber; you have to reforest as well.

The Reaper was hopefully to be just such an addition. Penciller Alan Davis and I swapped transatlantic phone calls and mail in those pre-Internet days, and hammered together a character we hoped would be a worthy (or perhaps, *un*worthy) addition to Batman's rogues gallery.

No points for guessing that "Batman: Year Two," which was published in DETECTIVE COMICS, was scheduled as a follow-up to "Batman: Year One," appearing in BATMAN by the talented team of Frank Miller and David Mazzucchelli. Having seen what Frank and Dave were up to, I didn't necessarily hope to write a story that would rival it—just one that would not unnecessarily suffer by comparison. To that end, I decided to punch some different buttons than "Year One" had. Since "Year One" was as close to a realistic treatment of The Batman as we're ever likely to see, I thought "Year Two" might therefore benefit by accenting some of the more traditional and romantic elements of the Dark Knight's life, such as a colorful foe and his relationships with supporting characters like Leslie Thompkins, who had been introduced by Denny O'Neil years before. It occurred to me only today that since Frank's two major Batman projects, BATMAN: THE DARK KNIGHT RETURNS, THE DARK KNIGHT STRIKES AGAIN (which are really one long, wonderful story) and "Batman: Year One" are, respectively, utterly fantastic and grimly realistic, "Year Two" may have been an attempt to bridge the gap between them, in mood as well as era. (And, more practically, any attempt to imitate the elements of "Year One" would have come up pathetically short.)

Alan Davis and inker Paul Neary did a great job of bringing the Reaper to life, and when they had to leave, Todd McFarlane and Alfredo Alcala (and then Todd on his own) continued a look that was paradoxically consistent yet entirely different. (Another bit of synchronicity: Frank and I are the only writers to have had Batman stories illustrated by Todd—Frank having scripted the *Spawn/Batman* team-up of years past.) However, some years later, when an idea for the Reaper's return came to me, I was able to lure Alan Davis back for BATMAN: FULL CIRCLE, this time with Mark Farmer as inker. Alan plays his cards pretty close to the vest, but I think he was glad to return to illustrate a full adventure of the villain whose look he created, epitomizing the title and the spirit of the project. Certainly FULL CIRCLE is my favorite of the many Batman stories I've written.

As to whether the Reaper is a worthy addition to Batman's foes...well, that's your judgment to make, not mine.

So if you enjoy "Batman: Year Two" and FULL CIRCLE, Alan, Paul, Todd, Alfredo, Mark and I are certainly grateful. But don't forget to give a nod to Bob, Bill, Gardner, Alvin, Dick, Lew, Frank, and David a veritable totem pole of talent—and only a few of the giants on whose shoulders we stand.

# BIOGRAPHIES

## MIKE W. BARR

A native of Akron, Ohio, Mike W. Barr has had a long career in comics, including time as both writer and editor. After first cracking the four-color pages with letters of comment, Barr began selling short stories to editor Julie Schwartz. By the late 1970s, Mike was a DC editor, handling titles such as THE FLASH and LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES. It is, however, in his time behind the keyboard that Barr has made his mark on the industry. He is best known for CAMELOT 3000, the DC maxiseries drawn by Brian Bolland that has become a perennial bestseller as a trade paperback collection. Barr also created the Outsiders, a team fronted by Batman, his all-time favorite character.

Barr has written numerous Batman adventures, including the first hardcover graphic novel to feature the hero, 1987's BATMAN: SON OF THE DEMON. His other writing for DC includes GREEN LANTERN, ELONGATED MAN and JUSTICE LEAGUE ADVENTURES. When DC acquired the rights to *Star Trek*, Barr was its first writer and has gone on to write the feature for other publishers. In 2003 Barr's first *Star Trek* novel, *Gemini*, saw print.

Barr also created *The Maze Agency*, a mystery series, and was a co-founder of the Malibu universe of comics characters, where he wrote the adventures of Mantra, a heroine without peer. Barr has also scripted the adventures of *G.I. Joe*, *Star Wars* and other features for comics and the Internet.

## ALAN DAVIS

Alan Davis first gained attention with his short-story work in England's legendary comics anthology title *2000 A.D.*, and he has collaborated with some of the industry's best-known writers, beginning with Alan Moore on the feature "D.R. and Quinch." Davis and Moore went on to contribute a popular run on Marvel U.K.'s *Captain Britain* feature. When lured to America, Davis teamed with Mike W. Barr on BATMAN AND THE OUTSIDERS, in addition to "Batman: Year Two." Davis also drew many other DC and Marvel superheroes before branching out as a writer himself. His first major effort was *ClanDestine* at Marvel, and he has subsequently written and drawn the Elseworlds miniseries JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA: THE NAIL.

## TODD McFARLANE

Todd McFarlane grew up in Canada as a major fan of both sports and comic books, so it's no surprise he's made his mark in both worlds. After his first work was bought by Epic Comics in 1984, McFarlane became the regular artist on DC's INFINITY, INC., which displayed his unique sense of page construction. McFarlane then gained major attention for his work on *The Amazing Spider-Man*, which led to his debut as writer/penciller of the new title *Spider-Man*. This acclaim encouraged McFarlane to join with several other artists to form Image Comics in 1992, which helped reinvigorate the comic book marketplace. His creation published through Image, *Spawn*, created a craze that brought the character to animation, feature films and toys. He then formed McFarlane Toys, a phenomenally successful producer of licensed action figures. This success allowed McFarlane to cross over into sports, becoming a part owner of a minor league hockey team and the full owner of Mark McGwire's record-setting 70th home-run baseball.

McFarlane lives in Arizona with his wife and children.

## MARK FARMER

Born in 1958, Mark Farmer has always been a comic book fan. He made his professional debut in the pages of England's *2000 A.D.* and went on to ink some of England's finest artists for both Fleetway and Marvel U.K., including the features "Death's Head," "Slaine" and "Tharg's Future Shocks."

When he began working for DC in 1985, Farmer was paired with Dave Gibbons on GREEN LANTERN, and he has subsequently worked on almost every major superhero in the DC Universe. He has also worked for many other American publishers, including Marvel and Dark Horse. In 1997, Farmer was named Best Inker in the U.K. Fan Awards.

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Farmer has expanded his repertoire to include writing, and he recently crafted the two-issue Elseworlds miniseries SUPERBOY'S LEGION. As is frequently the case, Farmer teamed with Alan Davis on the project. The two have had a lengthy association, which has included JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA: THE NAIL and the *Spider-Man* movie adaptation.

## PAUL NEARY

Paul Neary is a jack-of-all-trades, boasting a lengthy résumé as editor, writer, penciller and inker. In his native England, Neary served as Editor for the Marvel U.K. line of comics during the 1980s, helping to launch many original features that ultimately saw print around the world. Behind the drawing board, Neary was an artist on myriad features, including *Marvelman* and *The Madman*. In America, he is primarily known for his long run as an artist on *Captain America*. He also teamed with Alan Davis on *Excalibur* and "Batman: Year Two," among other features.

## ALFREDO ALCALA

In the 1970s, a wave of Philippine artists burst into American comics, but none were as prolific or long-lasting as Alfredo Alcala. In his homeland, Alcala used his artistic talents during World War II to paint maps for the Allies to use in locating hidden Japanese pillboxes. After the war, he began his comics career in 1948, drawing many features, including his own creation *Voltar*. It was this character, created in 1963, that led to international acclaim and brought his talents to the attention of America.

Alcala's lush line and attention to texture and detail made him a popular inker, and he worked on superhero, war, western and horror stories for DC, mainly inking but also doing some pencilling. He was a frequent contributor to Alan Moore's popular run on SWAMP THING, and during the 1990s he was a regular fixture in many Vertigo publications. Alcala also contributed work to several other American publishers before he died of cancer in April, 2000.

## RICHARD STARKINGS

Richard Starkings is a British import who has been instrumental in transforming comic book lettering from an invisible afterthought to an integral part of the page. He helped usher in the digital age of lettering with his founding of Comicraft, the industry's leading supplier of lettering and design services. He continues to serve as President and First Tiger of the Santa Monica-based company, and has branched out to write the online comic strip *Hedge Backwards*. Comicraft also produces the *Hip Flask* comic book.

## TODD KLEIN

Todd Klein spent over a decade working in DC's production department, where he honed his skills as a letterer and logo designer. When he left the staff, his freelance plate quickly filled, and he was soon one of the most in-demand letterers in the business. Klein has won numerous industry awards, including several for his trend-setting work on THE SANDMAN. He has also worked as a comics writer, including a stint on THE OMEGA MEN. Currently, Klein is the sole letterer and designer for Alan Moore's America's Best Comics imprint and select other features. He and his wife reside in New Jersey.

## STEVE OLIFF

Steve Oliff was the first American pioneer to use computers to color comic books. The native Californian established Olyoptics as a studio to design and color comic books, notably the *Akira* series for Epic Comics. Oliff's use of computers, matched with his extraordinary color palette, made him the premier colorist in the 1980s. He went on to train many of the most popular colorists working today, including Gloria Vasquez, who worked with him on "Batman: Year Two."

## TOM ZIUKO

The Buffalo, New York, native began his comic book career working in DC's production department before becoming a full-time colorist. He worked on countless DC comics throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Tom has also applied his skills to titles from Archie Comics, Eclipse Comics and Pacific Comics.

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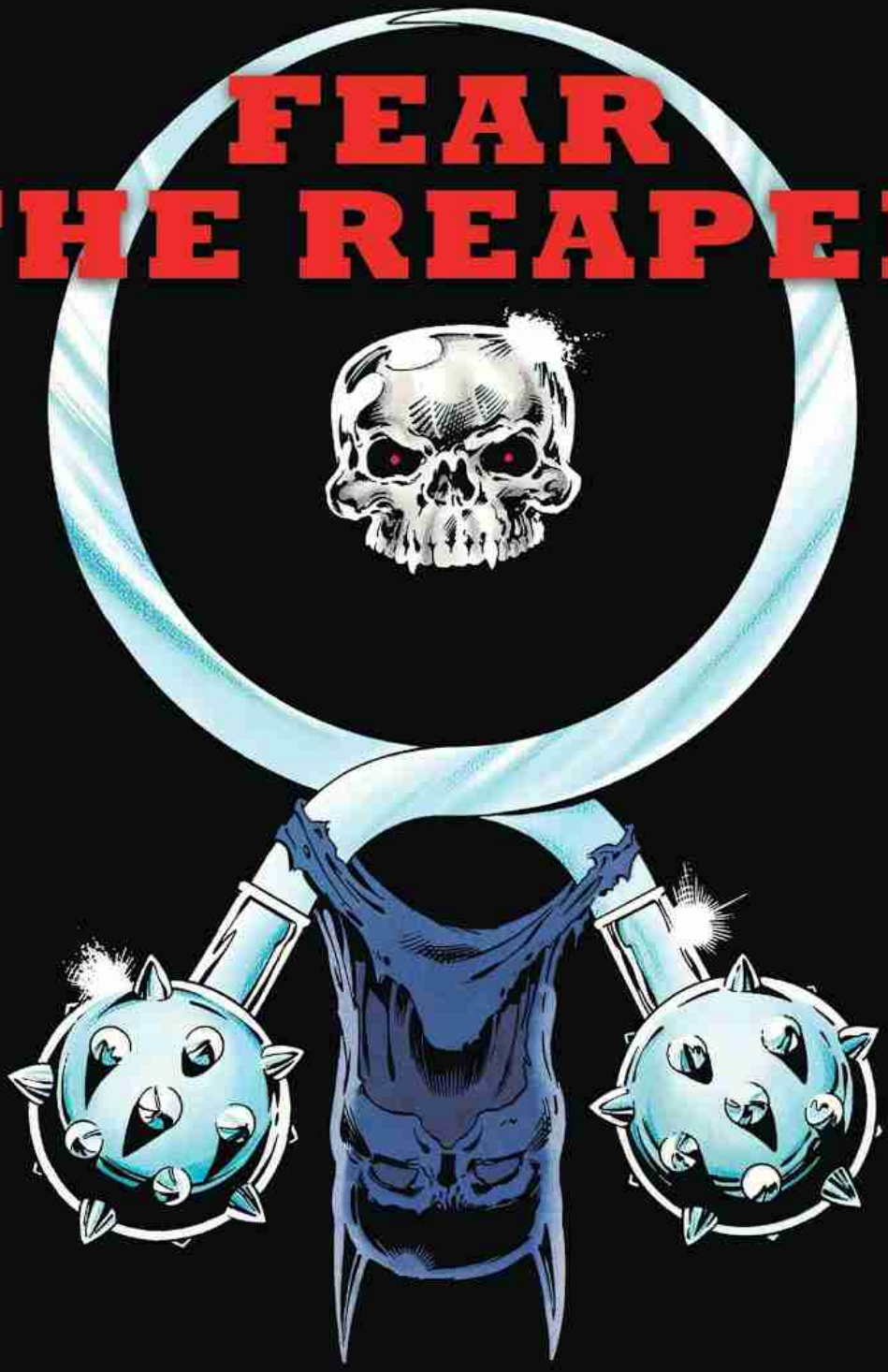
# FEAR THE REAPER



With only a year's experience as Gotham City's new protector under his belt, Batman must now confront a nightmare out of the past—a distorted reflection of himself called The Reaper, who hunted Gotham's criminals a generation earlier. His methods were harsh and cruel, and violent in the extreme. Now, just as a new breed of criminal is rising, the Reaper has returned to deal out his savage brand of justice. And the only way for Batman to stop this death-dealing vigilante is to forge an alliance with the man who destroyed his life—his own parents' murderer.

But can the Dark Knight stand to confront the secret of their deaths? Or will the Reaper's revelations finally cost him his sanity?

Celebrating 30 years since the publication of the seminal storyline by acclaimed creators **MIKE W. BARR** (BATMAN: SON OF THE DEMON) and artists **ALAN DAVIS** (JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA: THE NAIL, *The Avengers*), **TODD McFARLANE** (*Spawn*), **MARK FARMER** (SUPERBOY'S LEGION) and **PAUL NEARY** (*Captain America*), **BATMAN: YEAR TWO–THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY DELUXE EDITION** collects both the original "Year Two" storyline from DETECTIVE COMICS and BATMAN: FULL CIRCLE in one deluxe hardcover edition.

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